

Innovations In Food

Science Shows The Way To Safety And Savings

(NAPSA)—When it comes to getting top-quality food at low cost, an increasing number of scientists, gourmets and ordinary customers may soon be saying, “send in the clones.”

A clone is an animal that is a genetic copy—an exact replica—of another animal.

Surprising to many, that’s not such an unusual idea. Already, decades of advances in science, agriculture and animal breeding have contributed to the American consumer’s ability to walk into state-of-the-art grocery stores and purchase what he or she wants at a reasonable cost.

What’s more, ever since the Stone Age, farmers have used their understanding of genetics to improve plants and animals in an effort to increase yield, improve plant and animal health and reduce costs.

As far back as the 14th century, animal breeders have used techniques that seem “modern” to us, including artificial insemination. Today, techniques such as embryo transfer and in vitro fertilization are commonly used to produce high-quality meat.

“Farmers are some of the most technologically advanced individuals,” said Cori Wittman, director of regulatory relations at the American Farm Bureau Federation. “They are continually adopting technologies that can help them raise the best possible plants and animals, which in turn provide the best and healthiest foods for consumers.”

While currently there are no food products on the market from animal clones, in the future, farmers may be able to use cloning to continue the tradition of raising healthy and high-quality foods. For example, say a farmer has a



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bull known to provide offspring that produce superior steaks. Cloning technology will let the farmer “copy” that bull to improve the value of the herd.

“Animal cloning has the potential to be a powerful tool for livestock producers,” added Wittman. “This technology can help them continue the tradition of raising healthy animals and producing healthful foods.”

Recently, after five years of careful review, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that food from animal clones and their offspring are as safe as food from conventionally raised animals. This means that meat and milk from cloned animals are completely safe, because there is no difference. Few consumers will actually eat meat from an animal clone, however. Meat and milk in the stores will come from the conventionally bred offspring of animal clones.

They will be nutritionally equivalent to other products on the shelves, so, according to FDA’s labeling requirements, there will be no need to label them.

For more information, visit www.CloneSafety.org.