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Britain Believes No Milk From Clones Was Sold

By JULIA WERDIGIER

LONDON — Britain's Food Standards Agency said it found meat from three offspring of a cloned cow had entered the food chain in Europe. But it could not state for certain whether milk from a cloned offspring had been sold.

The statement was made after an investigation sparked by a report last month in the International Herald Tribune, the global edition of The New York Times. In the article, a British dairy farmer who insisted on anonymity said that he was using milk from a cow bred from a clone as part of his daily production.

In a statement released late Wednesday, the agency said that it had "received assurances" from local authorities who visited the farms, as well as from the dairy industry and the farmers involved, that no milk from three suspect cows had entered the food chain.

A spokeswoman for the agency said Friday that "there was no way to know for sure unless we have a time machine."

The agency was investigating animals and their offspring that were born in Britain from eight embryos from a cloned cow in the United States, where authorities have declared food from cloned cattle and other animals safe to eat.

Europeans, however, have long objected to [genetically modified crops](#) and many people look at animal cloning as potentially dangerous and cruel. Anyone seeking to sell meat or dairy products from clones or their offspring in Europe needs permission to do so under the [European Union's](#) "novel foods" regulations.

The agency said that one male offspring of one of the British-born cows was slaughtered on June 16 and its meat was sold at a butcher's shop in London "and will have been eaten."

Meat from two other animals, one slaughtered in 2009 and another this year, was sold in Scotland and Belgium, the agency said. The meat from another bull slaughtered last month was prevented from being sold.

James Kanter contributed reporting.