

ACAF Annual Report 2023/24 - Foreword

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Foreward

This report on the activities of the Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF) describes a large volume of careful work by the Secretariat and ACAF Members. The ACAF Terms of Reference state, “The primary role of ACAF is the risk assessment of applications for feed additives, feed of particular nutritional uses and feed detoxification processes.” This emphasis was reflected in the Committee’s workload: during 2023/24, thirty-five applications for authorisation of animal feed additives and two proposals for modification of the list of intended uses of feeds for particular nutritional purposes (PARNUT), but no feed detoxification processes were considered by the Committee.

Throughout the year we have worked to ensure that the core business of processing risk assessments for regulated products progressed smoothly, while we continued to develop new, more efficient ways of working. For feed additives, the evidence that an applicant is required to present is extensive, and sometimes the Committee’s ability to conclude on applications is impeded by gaps in the technical data presented by applicants, resulting in extended processing times.

To address this, one of our changes to the ways of working is that the Secretariat now undertake an in-depth completeness check on each application, and where necessary, request additional information from the applicant before presenting it to the Committee. We are also working to provide clear interpretations of the requirements for commonly misunderstood requirements, which should deliver more efficient risk assessment. This will allow the Committee to allocate time to address its broader terms of reference and prepare for the large, strategic challenges that will arise in the coming years.

The Committee itself has grown this year, with the addition of five new members and the departure of one, for a total of sixteen. It is a truly multidisciplinary team, including toxicologists, livestock scientists, nutritionists, microbiologists, chemists, workers in the animal feed industry, and a veterinarian. There is a good balance of academic, regulatory and industry backgrounds, which has proven helpful for the understanding of sometimes complex and occasionally obscure aspects of the applications we receive. Conflicts of interest, real and potential, are managed rigorously.

I would like to thank ACAF members, the Secretariat and policy colleagues for their hard work, professionalism, sense of humour, and patience over the last year. In the coming year, we aim to further refine our risk assessment processes and to address more strategic challenges to support innovation in animal health and well-being, while ensuring product safety and integrity.

Professor Nicholas Jonsson