

ACAF Annual Report 2024/25 - Foreword

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Foreword

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 2024/25 in which fifty applications for authorisation of animal feed additives were assessed, including a new use and modification of an existing authorisation and a renewal and modification of an additive. The Committee finalised a safety assessment for one particular nutritional purposes (PARNUT) authorisation; no feed detoxification processes were considered by the Committee.

Over the past year, the Committee has remained focused on ensuring the smooth progression of its core business, processing risk assessments for regulated products whilst continuing to develop more effective and efficient ways of

working without compromising the rigour of the assessment process in maintaining consumer, worker, animal and environment safety. In the case of feed additives, applicants are required to submit extensive supporting evidence. The Secretariat now undertakes a detailed completeness check for each application. This highlights gaps in the technical data provided and, where necessary, requests additional information from the applicants prior to its submission to the Committee. This has substantially improved the Committee's ability to reach a conclusion, leading to reduced processing times of applications. The Secretariat also highlights key issues within applications, and while members also can access the necessary information, this support confers more focused and effective scrutiny by Committee members. Alongside these procedural improvements, we are continually working to provide clearer guidance on commonly misunderstood requirements, helping to ensure more consistent and efficient risk assessments. From 1st April 2025, the periodic renewal of market authorisations of feed additives was removed allowing the Committee to focus their efforts on new authorisations and modifications of use of existing additives. These developments will enable the Committee to dedicate more time to its broader remit and to prepare for the significant strategic challenges that lie ahead. The Committee currently comprises sixteen members, with the appointment of two new members. The team encompasses a wide range of disciplines including toxicology, livestock science, nutrition, microbiology, molecular biology, chemistry, the animal feed industry, and veterinary medicine. The membership reflects a well-balanced mix of academic, regulatory, and industry backgrounds, which has been essential in evaluating the often complex and, at times, highly specialised applications under review. Conflicts of interest, both actual and perceived, are managed with strict diligence.

I extend my sincere thanks to ACAF members, the Secretariat and our policy colleagues for their dedication, professionalism and patience throughout the past year. Looking ahead, we remain committed to further enhancing our risk assessment processes and tackling strategic challenges that support innovation in animal health and welfare, while maintaining the highest standards of product safety and integrity.

Professor Nick Wheelhouse