

# **ACAF Terms of Reference**

## **Purpose**

1. To advise the Food Standards Agency (FSA) on any matters relating to the safety and use of animal feeds, feed additives and feeding practices, with particular emphasis on protecting human, animal and environmental health and with reference to new technical developments, having regard where appropriate to the views of relevant expert bodies.
2. To advise the FSA on selected matters where the expert advice of the Committee is requested.
3. The primary role of the Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF) is the risk assessment of applications for feed additives, feed of particular nutritional uses and feed detoxification processes.

## **Role and Responsibility**

4. It is the role of the ACAF to advise the FSA and ministers on the risks in relation to animal feed with particular regard to human health. Their main responsibility is to carry out the risk assessment for applications of feed additives, feed of particular nutritional uses and feed detoxification processes.
5. The Committee meets approximately six times a year for formal meetings and workshops, where they review dossiers in support of applications for authorisation and develop advice on feed safety issues.
6. The ACAF is supported in its work by a secretariat provided by the FSA. The secretariat has scientific expertise that enables them to provide Members with comprehensive background information and briefing papers on the applications that inform the decision-making processes of the Committee.

## **Membership**

7. The ACAF comprises of one Chair and two Deputy Chairs, and a minimum of ten members.

8. Members are recruited by open competition. The Committee is made up of a range of experts, covering relevant scientific disciplines, and knowledge of the feed sector who provide insight, advice and the technical knowledge needed to evaluate the safety of animal feedstuffs applications.

9. The normal duration of appointment for an ACAF member is three years and for the Chair, five years. Members and Chairs will normally not serve for longer than 10 years continuously.

10. If required, the ACAF can co-opt appropriate experts or ex-officio government officials or set up a sub-group to include such people on an ad-hoc, time-limited basis.

## **Independence and Transparency**

11. The ACAF is an independent Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) which operates to the highest standards of openness and transparency. It will work in accordance with guidelines by the FSA and relevant guidance and rules established across Government for the operation of SACs. Currently adopted guidance includes:

- The cross-Government Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CoPSAC), which includes the Principles of Scientific Advice to Government
- The Good Practice Guidelines for Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs).

## **Key elements of practice which underpin and assure this include:**

12. The ACAF meeting agendas, papers, minutes and reports are published, excepting confidential and reserved items.

13. The ACAF publishes an annual report and the ACAF Chair will report to the FSA Board annually at an open Board meeting.

14. The ACAF Chair has the right of direct access to the FSA's Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) and Chief Executive, and to FSA Board members (via the Agency Chair), at all times. Members also have the right of access to the CSA, the CE and Board on any matter which they believe raises important issues relating to their

duties as a Member.

15. In addition to regular contact between meetings, the ACAF Chair and FSA CSA will meet for a feedback discussion each year to review the work of the Committee against its remit, and the relationship with and support from the FSA.

16. The ACAF Chair will report to the FSA CSA biannually via the FSA SAC Chair's meeting. Members of the SAC who wish to raise concerns regarding the CSA's oversight of the committee have the right to do so via the FSA Chair or FSA Chief Executive.

17. The ACAF Chair will meet the FSA Chair annually to discuss the work of the ACAF.

## **Resources and Budget**

18. The ACAF is supported by a Secretariat provided by the Food Standards Agency.

19. The Secretariat is led by a Secretary who is responsible for the work of the Secretariat and management of overall workflow.

20. The Committee has no independent budget or expenditure. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) covers the costs for the operation of the Committee (including Secretariat support, Member's fees and expenses, and administrative costs for meetings and events). These are recorded formally in the accounts of the FSA.

21. The budget for the FSA is agreed every year by the FSA Business Committee.