

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SIXTY SEVENTH MEETING OF ACAF HELD ON
19 JUNE 2015**

Present:

Chairman Dr Ian Brown

Members Ms Angela Booth
Mr Geoff Brown
Ms Ann Davison
Professor Stephen Forsythe
Professor Ian Givens
Dr Wendy Harwood
Mrs Chris McAlinden
Dr David Peers
Dr Tim Riley
Professor Robert Smith
Mr Edwin Snow

Secretariat Mr Keith Millar (Secretary) – Food Standards Agency
Miss Mandy Jumnoodo – Food Standards Agency
Dr Mark Bond – Food Standards Agency

Assessors Mr Alan McCartney – Department of Agriculture and Rural
Development
Ms Claire Moni – Food Standards Agency, Scotland
Mrs Hilary Neathey – Food Standards Agency, Wales
Mrs Karen Pratt – Food Standards Agency
Mr Stephen Wyllie - Defra Assessor

Speakers: Mr Robin Irvine – Northern Ireland Grain Trade Association
Dr Jean Kennedy – Devenish Nutrition

Officials: Mrs Maria Jennings – Director Food Standards Agency in
Northern Ireland
Mr Gerard Smyth – Food Standards Agency in Northern
Ireland
Mr Anthony Higgins – Food Standards Agency in Northern
Ireland

1. The Chairman welcomed delegates to the 67th meeting of ACAF and reminded them that there would be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the meeting. The Chairman thanked Professor Chris Elliott and Queen's University for hosting the

meeting. Professor Elliott, acknowledged that the Committee had last visited Belfast in 2012 and wished the meeting well.

2. The Chairman noted that Professor Wall, from University College, Dublin was also attending the meeting. The Chairman had heard of the tragic death of some of his students in California and sent on behalf of him, the Secretariat and the Committee their deepest condolences to the families of the students.
3. Mrs Maria Jennings Director at the Food Standards Agency in Northern Ireland welcomed the Committee to Belfast noting ACAF's continuing commitment to visit Northern Ireland, periodically. She said that the meetings were particularly important because they helped the Committee gain an understanding of regional issues and allowed everyone with an interest in Northern Ireland to come along and watch the Committee at work. It also gave Members a chance to build on their experience through very informative visits. Mrs Jennings said that she understood that the Committee had found the visit to Devenish Nutrition's Poultry Performance facility both interesting and enjoyable.
4. Mrs Jennings explained the importance of the agri-food industry to the NI economy, which supported around 100,000 jobs and accounted for about one quarter of the total manufacturing sales output. The FSA in NI believed that the animal feedingstuffs industry in NI was leading the way in Ireland in terms of taking its responsibilities very seriously to produce and process feed safely. It was therefore timely for the Committee to hear about the journey that the Northern Ireland industry has been on, especially in light of the recent positive BSE case in Ireland.
5. Finally, Mrs Jennings thanked a number of people who had helped to make the meeting meaningful and relevant. These included Professor Chris Elliott and his team for hosting the meeting at Queen's; Devenish Nutrition for hosting the visit a 18 June; Robin Irvine from NIGTA and Jean Kennedy from Devenish Nutrition for providing the local input for the meeting; the ACAF secretariat and her own FSA staff for the background work in preparation for the meeting and visit; and the audience for coming along and taking an interest in the Committee's work. She said that the Agency was keen to hear attendees' views on the meeting and that a short survey would be emailed to them following the meeting.
6. The Chairman said that Mrs Karen Pratt and Mr Alan McCartney had replaced the FSA Assessor (Tim Franck) and the Northern Ireland Assessor (Dr Glenn Kennedy), following their respective recent departures. He invited both Karen and Alan to introduce themselves.

7. Mrs Pratt gave a brief summary of her background - she had worked for the Agency for a number of years in a variety of roles, most recently in delivery of hygiene controls at primary production. Mr McCartney similarly explained he was a food science graduate and worked in a number of roles in the Department of Agriculture & Rural Development, including in colleges and inspectorate before taking up his current post as Head of the Department's Agri-food Inspection Branch.
8. Apologies for absence were received from Mr Peter Francis and Mrs Stephanie Young.

Agenda Item 1 – Declaration of Members' Interests

9. Members of the Committee were asked to declare any relevant changes to their entries in the Register of Members' Interests, or any specific interest in items on the agenda. Professor Forsythe said that he had recently started to provide food safety advice to companies outside the European Union.

Agenda Item 2 – Draft Minutes of the Sixty fourth Meeting (MIN/14/02)

10. The minutes were adopted subject to some minor changes.

Agenda Item 3 – Food Fortress Protecting the Foodchain (ACAF/15/08)

11. Mr Robin Irvine the Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Grain Trade Association (NIGTA) welcomed the Committee to Belfast. He noted that three years ago Declan Billington (NIGTA) had provided an outline of the plan and aspirations of the industry led initiative to enhance and benchmark the position of best practice for the Northern Ireland livestock and animal feed industries, and to assist them in managing the risks associated with contamination of feed inputs into the sector. Mr Irvine then gave an update on the work since the 2012 meeting and future plans.
12. Mr Irvine said that the impetus for Food Fortress was through the Industry Food Assurance Group (IFAG) as a result of the Irish dioxin incident and the potential risks to industry through a contamination resulting in an export ban on Northern Ireland milk, meat or eggs. With help from Professor Chris Elliott and his colleagues at the Institute for Global Food Safety, a project had been put together to mitigate risks to industry which was effective, affordable and complemented existing schemes. In support of Food Fortress, Queen's University has developed a feed risk register, carried out a feed industry survey to establish baseline testing

within industry (including gap analysis) and calculated sampling requirements on a statistical basis.

13. Mr Irvine explained that the sampling programme had been devised for compounders. In this situation participants are issued with a sampling program, samples are assembled and composites are made up. The composites are then forwarded for testing to one of the four different laboratories selected to carry out the analysis. The results are disseminated and a certificate of analysis is issued for each test - these are shared with members and regulators. In the event of any breaches, members of the scheme are supported with the provision of the testing history through the schemes database. Queen's University is supporting the process through the preparation of an annual report and helping with regular risk re-runs. In total, Mr Irvine said that the scheme had collected 18 months of history on contaminants. He reported that in the current 12 month programme 145 samples had been tested for the presence of heavy metals; 119 samples tested for the presence of mycotoxins; 51 samples tested for pesticides and 102 samples tested for dioxin and dioxin-like PCBs. This was considerably more testing than had been carried out before and greatly increased the level of feed assurance achieved. The results are circulated to members with a laboratory certificate and also a Food Fortress certificate. The results are also uploaded onto the Food Fortress website and a summary can be viewed on the public pages. A secure login section is available which gives members, regulators and industry partners a more detailed view of the results on a monthly basis.
14. Mr Irvine said that the scheme was now looking at the early detection of risks in the supply chain. With over 90% of feed material sourced from outside Northern Ireland, the Scheme was now focusing on ports and importers. A risk-based programme for each feed commodity was produced with guidance on frequency of testing and on the building of composites. Results will be reported through the Food Fortress and displayed on the scheme website.
15. Mr Irvine went on to explain that the first 12 month programme ends on 30 June 2015 and that the scheme now covered 47 mills and 99% of production in Northern Ireland. Protocols had been agreed with regulators and the importers' pilot scheme was due to commence on 1 July 2015. Additionally, interest in the scheme had been generated outside of Northern Ireland and it was expected that 12 companies south of the border would be involved in the scheme. Similarly, interest has been shown from companies in England and it was expected that over 60 companies would be covered by the next programme. Mr Irvine said that the scheme managers had been in regular contact with both DARD and the FSA during development of Food Fortress and had received support at all levels including from the Minister of Agriculture. The results of the sampling will help inform DARD risk assessments and will influence official testing in 2016. Additionally, working arrangements

between Food Fortress and DARD has been agreed in the event of a contamination incident.

16. Finally, Mr Irvine said that Food Fortress had fully met the expectations of the IFAG in that the scheme has been enthusiastically received by the food sector, including full engagement with the broiler sector and full commitment from the red meat sector. In addition, the dairy sector was using Food Fortress as a unique selling point for Northern Ireland milk products.

Discussion

17. Following a question from the ACAF Chairman on the safeguards of the scheme for farmers, Mr Irvine said that the scheme operated within the legal requirements that were enforced by DARD and was accepted by UFAS¹ as meeting all their requirements for contaminant testing. A Member of the Committee asked whether the scheme was able to pick up home producers. Mr Irvine said that this issue was being considered, adding that within the importers' scheme, a comparison was being made between imports and home-produced materials and the scheme was monitoring finished feeds. Mr Irvine confirmed that the time period between sampling and the results being known was one month; however, the feed being sampled is released before the results are known. In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, Mr Irvine said that any penalties imposed would relate to failure to provide samples by the due date and this could result in removal from the scheme. However, where breaches were detected these had to be reported to DARD. Following a question from a Member of the Committee, Mr Irvine confirmed that importers would be required to submit samples for testing and that there were plans to extend the monitoring to include premixtures and additives.
18. Another Member of the Committee congratulated everyone involved in the scheme noting that the scheme had gathered together the whole industry and that the testing being done was a verification of the controls. The Member asked what percentage of feed used was being produced by compounders and whether the scheme was planning to extend the testing range. Mr Irvine responded that there were some contaminants that did not lend themselves to testing but Food Fortress was seeking advice from Queen's University. The percentage of feed being produced by compounders varied depending on the sector, for example pig feed mixed on farm accounted for 40% and discussions were taking place with the sector to further develop the scheme. Most ruminant feed was compound feed.
19. Mr McCartney (the Northern Ireland Assessor) said that the scheme was a welcome and pro-active development. DARD had been in close discussions with NIGTA and other participants of the scheme. Both parties were considering how to better utilise

¹ Universal Feed Assurance Scheme

the results and resources. Protocols were being finalised to set out how to exchange information. DARD welcomed the developments that will provide assurance to existing and future customers. Mr McCartney noted this was being demonstrated in work undertaken by the Dairy Council on assuring milk and milk products in Northern Ireland. He added there was a level of commonality between Food Fortress and the Animal Feed Official Controls Sampling Programme. The successful operation of Food Fortress will allow some resource to be diverted into other areas of the Animal Feeds Official Control Programme.

20. The ACAF Secretary commenting on the excellent discussions and acknowledged the significant input made by Robin Irvine, Owen Brennan, Declan Billington, Professors Patrick Wall and Chris Elliot in ensuring that the scheme was a success. Finally, the Committee agreed that it was extremely interested in the work being taken forward by NIGTA and its future plans. It therefore requested an update when further progress had been made.

Agenda Item 4 – Food Innovation through Advanced Animal Nutrition (ACAF/15/10)

21. Dr Jean Kennedy (Devenish Nutrition Ltd) introduced ACAF paper 15/10. She noted that the ACAF Forward Work Programme includes the topic of enrichment of food via feed. Dr Kennedy stated that there was great potential for the composition of feed to influence the quality of food for human health benefit, whilst also maintaining/improving the health, welfare and performance of animals. Dr Kennedy said that against a backdrop of commodity food markets there is scope to further promote the image of the industry and bring consumers on the journey to improve perception. She noted that European Commission Regulation 1169/2011, on the provision of food information to consumers, cites that ‘food information shall not be misleading, particularly by suggesting that the food possesses special characteristics when in fact all similar foods possess such characteristics and specifically emphasising the presence or absence of certain ingredients and/or nutrients.’
22. Dr Kennedy further stated that when done properly, improving food through feed can positively impact on every part of the food chain. Health is a prerequisite for economic growth. What we eat and how our food is produced is important for our health. Diet-related disease, including obesity, cardiovascular diseases (CVD), cancer, and diabetes are responsible for 35 million deaths and 60% of all deaths every year globally. A combination of increased availability of low-cost, high calorie, nutrient-poor foods over the last four decades was a key component to the rise in obesity worldwide. The presentation particularly highlighted areas where the feed industry can have a real impact throughout the food chain and ultimately on human health. These included the enrichment of food via animal feed.

Discussion

23. Following a question from the ACAF Chairman, Dr Kennedy confirmed that Devenish Nutrition only enrich food via animal feed, and do not enrich food directly. A Member of the Committee commented that it was good to hear that companies were considering the enrichment of food via animal feed in a holistic way. The Member pointed out that before embarking on such work consideration should be given as to why the work should be undertaken, and how the enrichments can have beneficial effects on the whole diet. The Member noted that in the past there was a tendency to judge the effects of changes to nutritional composition of the food rather than the health benefits. The Member asked what was Devenish's top target for change. Dr Kennedy said that Devenish was working on several options, but a current example focuses on the effects on health from enrichment of the omega-3 fatty acids DHA² and EPA³. The Member and Dr Kennedy then discussed the FSA recommendation for eating two portions of fish per week; one of which should be oily. Dr. Kennedy asked if the UK Government would consider changing the recommendation to remove the reference to fish, since Omega 3 fatty acids can now be obtained in the diet through enriched meat, milk and eggs. The Member noted that oily fish has helped to reduce levels of Omega 3 fatty acids due to removal of fish meal/oil from fish diets. The Member asked if Devenish was considering anything in relation to DPA⁴. Dr. Kennedy stated that because there is no associated nutrition or health claims for DPA, it was not being considered.
24. The ACAF Chairman and a Member of the Committee commented on the lower proportion of household budget spent on food in the European Union (EU) compared to that in the past and especially when compared to third countries. Another Member said that consumers would prefer to see animals receive a naturally nutritious diet but were also concerned about the price of food. Additionally, it was important that labels provided sufficient information to allow consumers to make an informed choice about what to eat. Dr Kennedy agreed with the comments made, adding that healthy eating should be an easier option. In response to a question from another Member of the Committee on whether Devenish had a public engagement programme, Dr Kennedy said that it was important to receive feedback and Devenish was communicating with all relevant parties.
25. Another Member of the Committee commented on the European Commission's position on maximum limits of additives in feed, e.g. selenium and iodine, and issues associated with human health in terms of over-supplementation for population sub-groups. Dr. Kennedy stated that Omega 3 enrichment of feed comes from a feed material, not a feed additive. Another Member of the Committee asked how

² Docosahexaenoic acid

³ Eicosapentaenoic acid

⁴ Docosapentaenoic Acid

Devenish intended to be competitive in an ever-changing market. Dr Kennedy said that the company would compete on the basis of sustainability and added value. Members agreed that consumer perceptions were key to this issue and that consumers should have a free but informed choice once they have received all the essential information.

26. The Committee agreed that it would revisit this issue at its October 2015 meeting, where two Members will provide a discussion paper on the relationship between feed additives and the enrichment/enhancement of animal diets for human health benefit.

Action: Committee/Secretariat

Agenda Item 5 – Update on the Review of the Report on On-farm feeding practices (ACAF/15/09)

27. The ACAF sub-group Chairman (Ms Angela Booth) provided Members with details of progress made by the group in reviewing the ACAF report into on-farm feeding practices which was published in 2003. She thanked Members of the sub-group, the ACAF Secretariat and others involved in the review. Ms Booth stated that since the publication of the Committee's report over ten years ago the issue of on farm feeding was still highly relevant. She said that the revised document would provide emphasis on the following areas: the difference in supply chains; the progress within the industry in terms of volume and type of feedingstuffs; professionalism and self-regulation; and developments in supply chains, including the formation of the United Kingdom Former Foodstuffs Processors Association (UKFFPA). The document will also identify risks and gaps, and highlight new sectors, like hobby farmers and other areas such as the identification of all livestock producers and gaps regarding assurance in the supply chain. Ms Booth acknowledged the excellent work that former ACAF member Helen Raine had undertaken on the original report. She noted that there was still some work required to complete the document but asked the Committee to consider whether there were any other areas or gaps that should be included in the document.

Discussion

28. The ACAF Chairman congratulated the sub-group for producing an excellent document and noted that further work was required before the document could be finalised. Members of the Committee agreed with the ACAF Chairman and will provide the Secretariat with their written comments. It was also agreed that a final discussion on the draft report would take place at the Committee's October 2015 meeting.

Agenda Item 6 – Matters arising from the minutes of previous meetings

29. The ACAF Chairman confirmed that the following actions from previous meetings had been undertaken:

Presentation on sourcing certified palm oil in animal feed

30. At the 2 February 2015 meeting, Ms Wood (consultant, Efeca) said that the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil had a very transparent auditing process and agreed to provide details of the costs of the various schemes after the meeting.

31. Members were sent additional information on 11 February 2015.

FVO Audit on Animal By-products

32. At the October 2014 meeting, the ACAF Chairman, noting that the European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) was carrying an audit on Animal By-products controls in the UK, requested an update.

33. Members were sent a copy of links to the FVO audit report on 14 May 2015.

Forward Work Programme

34. At the Committee's October 2014 meeting Members agreed that the forward work plan should be amended in light of the Committee's discussions.

35. The Chairman on behalf of the ACAF Secretariat thanked the Committee for its help in finalising its forward work plan which was uploaded onto the ACAF website at the end of May 2015.

Agenda Item 7 – Any Other Business

36. The ACAF Chairman confirmed that there were no items raised under this agenda item.

Information Papers

37. The ACAF Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the following information papers:

- EU Developments (ACAF/15/11); and

- Update on the work of other advisory committees (ACAF/15/12).

Date of the next meeting

38. The ACAF Chairman said that the next meeting will take place on 28 October 2015 at Aviation House.

ACAF Secretariat
August 2015

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Questions and Answers

Paul Featherstone (United Kingdom Former Foodstuffs Processors Association) – on Agenda item 4, Food Innovation through Advanced Animal Nutrition asked what DHA/DPA and EPA stood for. Professor Givens explained that these were long chain fatty acids. He added that no-one knew the value of DPA. Mr Featherstone, noting the discussion on the comparison of expenditure on food budgets in the EU and South American countries highlighted the importance of the work of his association on recycling former foodstuffs.

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