

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS**

**63rd Meeting of ACAF on 26 February 2014**

**Information Paper**

**UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**Secretariat  
February 2014**

## **UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

### **Purpose**

1. This paper outlines issues from other advisory committees that may be of interest to ACAF.

### **Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)**

2. The ACMSF met on 30 January 2014. Topics for discussion included:
  - Professor Sarah O'Brien presented the draft final report of the work of the *Ad Hoc* Group on Foodborne Viral Infections;
  - Public Health England updated the Committee on the incidence of Listeriosis in England and Wales;
  - the Committee was asked to comment on the FSA's risk ranking work on ready-to-eat foods for vulnerable groups in relation to Listeria;
  - Public Health England presented the findings from a Street Spice curry leaves outbreak investigation; and
  - Dr Paul Cook updated members on the outcome of the epidemiology of foodborne infections group meeting which took place on 3 December 2013.

### Antimicrobial resistance working group

3. The Group met on 6 December 2013. An update on this meeting was presented to the full committee on 30 January 2014 (paper ACM/1139) which can be found at:  
<http://acmsf.food.gov.uk/acmsfmeets/acmsf2014/acmsf300114/acmsfag300114>
4. A further meeting was held on 4 February 2014 via teleconference where the Group discussed aspects of Defra's abattoir survey of pigs.
5. The next meeting of the ACMSF will be on 26 June 2014.

### **Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)**

6. ACNFP met on 20 November 2013. Items discussed included the following novel food applications:
  - Buglossoides oil;
  - 1-Methylnicotinamide Chloride (1-MNA);

- ketone ester;
  - DHA Rich algal oil from *Schizochytrium*;
  - D-Ribose;
  - Extension of use of phytosterols in fat spreads and fat based emulsions with cooking and baking applications;
  - chia seeds; and
  - sporopollenin shells from club moss.
7. In addition to carrying out risk assessments on the above applications, the Committee discussed a recent article that reported on the potential presence of plant derived DNA sequences in human blood samples. It is suggested these sequences may be derived from DNA fragments large enough to encode entire genes. The Committee was asked to comment on the article and to indicate whether there were any safety concerns in relation to the risk assessment of GMOs.
8. The meeting on 20 November 2013 was followed by a successful open event hosted by the ACNFP. Over 30 members of the public attended representing a range of industries, consumers, enforcement officers and students.
9. The event consisted of presentations on the work of the ACNFP, followed by discussions in small break out groups on:
- evaluating traditional foods from other parts of the world; and
  - assessing the additive effects of novel ingredients in Food Standards Agency.
10. The event ended with an open discussion on issues relevant to the assessment of novel or GM foods.
11. The most recent meeting of the ACNFP was held on 12 February 2014, items on the agenda for this meeting can be found using the link below:

<http://acnfp.food.gov.uk/meetings/>

### **Advisory Committee on Releases into the Environment (ACRE)**

12. ACRE met on 6 December 2013 with Professor Rosie Hails as the new chairperson. Members were informed of the new guidance on appointments and the triennial review of ACRE which would start in March 2014. ACRE agreed future committee meetings would be held in public (with closed sessions only where necessary e.g. commercial confidentiality issues).
13. ACRE confirmed it agreed with EFSA's opinions on applications to market GT73 oilseed rape, T25 maize and MON87708 soybean (for all uses excluding cultivation in the EU). It also considered an application to market GM cut carnation flowers.

14. In all these cases ACRE advised these posed no greater risk than their conventional counterparts.
15. ACRE agreed to set up a working group to consider what constitutes environmental harm and discussed the questions that a GMO risk assessment is expected to address in terms of potential impacts in different contexts and on different scales. The working group would begin by consolidating a list of questions. ACRE acknowledged that the questions may be of wider relevance but noted the particular issues associated with GMO environmental risk assessments; for example, the regulatory requirement to use the non-GM parental line as a comparator in risk assessments.
16. Following publication in August 2013 of its reports on the EU GMO regulatory system, ACRE considered it helpful to discuss with EFSA its differing views on how unintended effects on non-target organisms should be dealt with in environmental risk assessments. The chair suggested that it would be useful to organise a meeting in 2014 to frame the discussion before arranging a more substantive meeting with EFSA later in the year.
17. ACRE also met on 21 February 2014 and the main items discussed were an application for a release trial of GM camelina with omega-3 fatty acids in its seeds, and an application to release 2 non-native species of mites as biocontrol agents.
18. The agenda is at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/277243/20140131\\_web\\_agenda.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277243/20140131_web_agenda.pdf)

**The Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)**

19. COT met on 10 December 2013. Topics for discussion included:
- assessment of the adequacy of the 10-fold uncertainty factor to allow for interspecies - variation in developmental toxicity;
  - potassium salt replacers in vulnerable groups - modelling potential potassium intakes by UK population;
  - additional information on children - Scoping paper on the obesogen hypothesis;
  - SACN Review of vitamin D. Adverse effects of high levels - Vitamin D and primary hyperparathyroidism and granulomatous disease;
  - third draft statement of potential risks of  $\alpha$ -,  $\beta$ - and  $\gamma$ -hexachlorocyclohexanes in the infant diet; and

- first draft statement on the potential risks from perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) in the infant diet.

20. The most recent COT meeting took place on 4 February 2014. Agenda items can be viewed at:

<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotmtgs/>

### **General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)**

21. The last GACS meeting was held on 8 October 2013. Meeting papers, presentation slides and draft minutes are available at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/gacs/gacs-mins-oct13.pdf>

Agenda items included:

- **High-level challenge and assurance on FSA's use of science**  
Presentation by Steve Wearne, FSA Director of Policy, and discussion by the Committee, on the FSA's new high-level science assurance model which included the creation of an external Chief Scientific Advisor (CSA) and a full-time Director of Science, Evidence & Research (DSER).<sup>1</sup>
- **Science in the FSA**  
Report on science activities and plans, and discussion.
- **Science in the SACs**  
Update on SAC activities and discussion on cross-cutting activities.
- **Review of GACS work plan and discussion of ideas for new working groups**  
GACS reviewed its working groups and ideas for new work. It agreed to set up a new Working Group to look at the use of different types of evidence and how these are assessed and weighted.
- **Presentation on FSA intelligence hub**  
Head of Policy and Strategy in the FSA's Chemical Safety Division Terry Donohoe gave a presentation on the FSA project to establish an intelligence hub.
- **Report from the Working Group on Data Exploitation**  
Interim report and recommendation.
- **Report from the Working Group on the Use of Science in Emergencies**  
Interim report and recommendations.

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<sup>1</sup> Note - A follow-up discussion was held on 18th October between Steve Wearne and GACS members – minutes of this discussion are included as an Annex to the GACS 8<sup>th</sup> October meeting minutes

22. The next GACS meeting will be held on 19th March 2014. It will be preceded by the GACS annual spring dinner on 18th March. Provisional agenda items for the meeting include:
- report on Science in the FSA;
  - science in the SACs - update on SAC activities;
  - FSA evidence portfolio;
  - report from Working Group on Data Exploitation;
  - report from Working Group on Use of Science in Emergencies;
  - report from new Working Group on Use of Evidence (weighting of evidence); and
  - presentation from global food security initiative champion Tim Benton (*to be confirmed*).
23. The final agenda and papers for the meeting will be published up to 2 weeks in advance on the GACS website.
24. The autumn GACS meeting is scheduled for 29 October 2014.

#### **Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)**

25. In September 2013, the SSRC made recommendations about the Agency's future quantitative data needs. These are available at:

<http://multimedia.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/recommendation>

26. The last committee meeting was held on the 3 October 2013 agenda items included:
- first Report from the Strategy Sub-Group;
  - first Report from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Sub-Group, including a discussion about the joint call with the ESRC. The Food Standards Agency and the ESRC formed a strategic partnership in 2008 to fund activities, which aim to develop the social science evidence base on issues around food;
  - review of research processes;
  - research priorities update;
  - working with Communications Division;
  - update on recommendations; and
  - review of the forward work plan.
27. Members of the SSRC also continued to advise the Agency on key pieces of social science research:

- the Strategy Sub Group (SSG) had their second meeting on 12 December 2013. Key discussion items included: a paper on risk/ benefit perception and the review of the FSA Science Governance Framework.
- **Domestic Kitchen practices:** this work is now complete and the report is available at:

[http://www.foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f\\_category\\_id=&f\\_report\\_id=818](http://www.foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f_category_id=&f_report_id=818)

- The research team are currently drafting academic publications.
- **Food and You** - fieldwork for Wave 3 of Food and You has been commissioned and will take place from April – August 2014. The first report will be published in October 2013. Two projects on secondary analysis of Food and You Wave 1 and Wave 2 data are also underway: one reviewing the index of recommended practice and conducting secondary analysis of the data; the second considering the relationships between food safety and nutrition.

28. The next Committee meeting will be held on the 20th March 2014, in Aviation House.

#### **Veterinary Residues Committee (VRC)**

29. The VRC last met on 28 November 2013. At the meeting, the results to date from the 2013/14 Non-Statutory Surveillance Plan were considered together with results of the 2013 Statutory Surveillance Plan since the meeting in September 2013. The Committee also discussed the results of the FSA's current 100% testing programme for phenylbutazone in horses submitted for slaughter for human consumption.

30. The next meeting will take place on 13 March 2014.

#### **Appointments and Recruitment Exercises**

##### **ACRE**

31. One ACRE Member has been reappointed and an exercise to appoint 3 new Members and reappoint another Member is in progress.

##### **ACMSF**

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**ACAF Secretariat  
February 2014**