

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

47th Meeting of ACAF on 23 September 2009

Information Paper

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

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Purpose

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

Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

2. The next meeting of ACMSF will be held on 24 September 2009. The following items are on the agenda for discussion:

Campylobacter case control study

- The Health Protection Agency (HPA) will present an analysis of data from this study for the over 60s age group.

Listeria in the over 60's

- Dr Mike Howard will present work undertaken by the Social Science Research Committee to consider food storage and handling practices of the over 60's in the home (see paragraph 22).

E.coli Inquiry

- Ms Liz Redmond (FSA) will update the Committee on the findings of the public inquiry into the E.coli O157 outbreak in South Wales.

UK Food Surveillance Database

- The FSA will present work on developing a UK food surveillance database.
3. The ACMSF's Report on the Increased Incidence of Listeriosis in the UK will be published in September 2009.
 4. The next meeting of ACMSF is scheduled for 3 December 2009.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

5. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 16 September 2009. The agenda will include the following 2 items on GM:
 - Report on the Long Term Effects of Genetically Modified Crops on Animal and Human Health (known as the BEETLE Report (Biological and Ecological Evaluation Towards Long Term Effects) - this is a report prepared for the EC by a consortium of German organisations. the study

was undertaken to examine the question of potential long term effects on health and the environment (including biodiversity) of genetically modified plants that are marketed in the EU.

- EFSA Opinions on antibiotic resistance marker genes.
6. The Committee will also be discussing the role of ethics in the work of the ACNFP.
 7. The next ACNFP meeting will be held on 26 November 2009.

Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)

8. ACRE met on 16 July 2009. The main points of interest were:

NK603 maize

9. In July, ACRE considered an EFSA opinion on authorisation of use of NK603 maize in the EU. ACRE felt this maize was unlikely to pose a greater risk than its non-GM counterparts but a post-market monitoring system should be put in place to manage the risk that herbicide regimes used with this GMO could be more harmful to farmland wildlife than those used with non-GM maize. ACRE agreed to consider this further once the results of a desk study on weed monitoring were available, but agreed to draft advice on the risk/uncertainty associated with the use of herbicide regimes used in association with GM and non-GM maize and their impacts. This would lay the foundation as to what monitoring was appropriate.

T25 maize

10. ACRE considered further information on an application for re-authorisation of the use of T25 maize in the EU. The UK leads on the environmental risk assessment for this application. ACRE had asked for further information to support the applicant's conclusions on environmental safety. ACRE concluded this GMO was no greater a risk than its conventional counterparts but recommended that post-market monitoring is required to ensure that the management practices used with T25 maize would not cause more harm than those used with non-GM maize.

Safeguard actions

11. ACRE also considered EFSA opinions on safeguard clauses invoked by Austria on GT73, MS8, Rf3, MS8 X Rf3 oilseed rape. ACRE looked at the sections of EFSA's opinion dealing with evidence submitted by Austria on environmental risk, which concerns persistence of feral oilseed rape plants derived from seed spilled during transportation and the potential for GM plants to pollinate sexually compatible wild relatives. ACRE had previously taken these issues into account and agreed with EFSA there was no new evidence to invalidate the previous risk assessments made on these GMOs.

12. The next ACRE meeting will be held on 10 September 2009.

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

13. The next meeting of COT will be held on Tuesday 22 September 2009. The following items are included on the agenda for discussion:

- organophosphates and human health: outstanding Government Funded Research;
- paraoccupational Pesticide Exposure;
- risk assessment of bystander/resident exposure to pesticides;
- toxicological aspects of the SACN report on Iron; and
- second Draft Statement COT workshop on 21st century toxicology.

14. The subsequent COT meeting will be held on 27 October 2009.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

15. The GACS published its first Annual Report, covering the period from the Committee's establishment in December 2007 to March 2009. The report was presented to the Agency Board at its open meeting on 14 July 2009 at which the GACS Chair, Professor Colin Blakemore, gave an overview of the work of the GACS and its future plans.

16. Topics for discussion at the GACS 4th meeting on 8 September 2009 are as follows:

- report from the Agency Chief Scientist: an update from Andrew Wadge on his work and plans for Agency Science, and questions and discussion by GACS;
- response to the Science Review of the Agency: discussion of an action plan to implement the Agency's response to the Science Review of the Agency;
- developing the Agency's Science & Evidence Strategy: discussion of progress and a first draft of the Agency's next Science & Evidence Strategy;
- outcomes from GACS horizon-scanning workshop: discussion of actions to follow up issues identified in the workshop on 24 June 2009;
- distinction between risk assessment and risk management: discussion of a plan to look at the clarity of the distinction and how it is observed in practice; and
- issues arising from the SACs.

17. The GACS Secretariat and Chief Scientist Team are developing plans for the first Annual Conference for members of Scientific Advisory Committees. Further details will be provided in due course, via Committee Secretariats.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

18. Work being carried out by SACN is as follows:

- Iron and Health report - a draft report on iron and health is currently out for consultation. Details can be found on the Committee website at the link below:

http://www.sacn.gov.uk/reports_position_statements/reports/draft_iron_and_health_report_039scientific_consultation039_-_june_2009.html

- Energy Working Group report - aims to review and agree on the interpretation of the methods, definitions and assumptions used by COMA (1991) and FAO/WHO/UNU (2005) to agree energy requirements and agree a framework by which to arrive at energy requirements for the UK population and its sub groups. The Working Group hope to agree population based Dietary Reference Values for energy, and provide recommendations taking into account age, body size, levels of activity, gender and physiological state (i.e. growth, pregnancy and lactation) while considering the implications of these recommendations on the requirements for other nutrients.

SACN hope to put a draft of the Energy report out for consultation in mid to late October 2009.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

19. The Strategic Partnership with the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) that has been part of the work programme of the SSRC has continued to develop. The call that was published earlier this year (exploring and explaining dietary decisions in the 21st century) has resulted in the commissioning of a project investigating food practices and employed families with younger children. This work will be led by researchers at the Institute of Education, University of London.
20. The relationship with the ESRC has been further developed by the Agency becoming involved with the Understanding Society longitudinal survey. This is a household panel survey of 40,000 households (including those recruited to the previous British Household Panel Survey in 1991) with annual data collection that is led by the ESRC and carried out by the University of Essex, in collaboration with other organisations. SSRC together with the Agency are also working towards establishing a formal concordat between the FSA and ESRC.

21. Work on reviewing the Agency's Consumer Attitudes Survey carried out by the SSRC has led to the commissioning of a new survey looking at public attitudes and behaviour. Members of the SSRC were instrumental in identifying the most appropriate methodology for the new survey and following a comprehensive procurement process the contract to carry out the research has been awarded to TNS BMRB in collaboration with the University of Westminster and the Policy Studies Institute. Following development work over the coming months, fieldwork is scheduled to start in the spring with the results of the first survey reported at the end of 2010.
22. A working group of the SSRC has been preparing a paper outlining the existing social science evidence in relation to the prevalence of Listeria in the over 60's. The paper (will be available on the ACMSF website and the SSRC website) will be discussed at the ACMSF meeting at the end of September.
23. At its next meeting, the SSRC will be discussing food safety and the behaviour of food business operators and enforcement officers. It is likely that the committee will undertake some work in this area going forward - this may be with other SAC's (e.g. ACMSF).
24. SSRC endorsed the Strategy for Social Science in the Agency at its first meeting (food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/ssrcstrat.pdf). Members of the committee have been involved in developing an implementation plan and this will pick up the recommendations made by Go-Science that are pertinent to social science in the Agency.
25. The SSRC has been involved in developing the Register of Specialists for Social Science. The register contains the details of individuals with either a social science background or experience of using social science in policymaking. Individuals on the register have agreed to provide the Agency with advice within their area of expertise when this is requested. Periodically, the SSRC are invited to identify others with whom collaboration or access to expertise would be beneficial and the Register is updated accordingly.
26. The next SSRC meeting will be held on Tuesday 20 October 2009.

Recruitment Exercises

27. ACNFP is currently recruiting for a new Chair and also a new expert member in molecular biology preferably with a research background in plant genetics.
28. ACRE is in the process of recruiting some new members to replace those who have had to step down this year. They hope to have 3 new members appointed by the end of September 2009.

29. COT will be recruiting 3 committee members and 2 new lay members before the end of the year.
30. SACN are coming to the final stage of appointments and will be submitting recommendations to Ministers shortly. SACN will recommend 6 possible new members and a possible new Chair. They hope to finalise appointments by the end of the year.

**ACAF Secretariat
September 2009**