

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

49th Meeting of ACAF on 3 March 2010

Information Paper

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

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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 next meeting of ACMSF will be held on 25 March 2010. The following items are on the agenda for discussion:

- ***Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP): Risk assessments on the use of source segregated composts in agriculture***

The FSA will brief the Committee on the risk assessment work carried out under the WRAP Confidence in Compost Programme.

- ***FSA/BBSRC/Defra Campylobacter Workshop***

Ms Liz Redmond will brief the Committee on the outputs from the FSA/Defra/BBSRC Campylobacter workshop.

- ***Foodborne viruses***

The FSA will present a paper updating Members on developments in this area.

- ***Listeria monocytogenes: redefining the population at risk***

The Health Protection Agency (HPA) will present a paper updating Members on developments in this area.

- ***M.bovis: possible health risks from meat and milk***

The FSA will present a paper updating Members on developments in this area.

- ***Biltong***

A presentation by Campden BRI of a draft report on microbiological hazards associated with biltong and similar dried meat products.

- ***Food Hygiene Delivery Programme***

The FSA will brief the Committee on the Food Hygiene Delivery Programme.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

3. The most recent meeting of ACNFP took place on 10 February 2010 (see link to ACNFP website below). The Committee discussed a number of issues including:

- report back on a postal consultation that had recently been held on an EFSA draft opinion on the assessment of allergenicity of GMOs. The EFSA draft opinion is available on EFSA's website; and
- effects of three GMOs (MON810, MON863 and NK03) on the health of mammals. This information paper was about a study undertaken by researchers at Comité de Recherche et d'Information Indépendantes sur le génie Génétique (CRIIGEN).

<http://www.acnfp.gov.uk/meetings/acnfpmeet10/acnfpmeet100210/acnfpagen100210>

Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)

4. ACRE met on 12 January 2010 when it considered two applications from Monsanto to cultivate GM maize in the EU.
5. The first was for MON 89034 x NK603 in which GM events conferring herbicide tolerance (NK603) and insect resistance (MON 89034) have been stacked by conventional breeding. ACRE was content with the molecular characterisation provided in the application and considered it is very unlikely this maize would survive outside of cultivated conditions in the UK. ACRE required further information to support the applicant's conclusion that Cry proteins in the GMO are not toxic to non-target organisms at biologically relevant concentrations. ACRE considered that the applicant had not addressed the potential for herbicide regimes used in association with this GM maize to have a greater impact on biodiversity as a consequence of more effective weed control compared with regimes used in association with non-GM maize, and concluded that a post-market monitoring system needed to be implemented to manage the risk that herbicide regimes used in association with this GMO could be more harmful to farmland biodiversity than those used in association with non-GM maize.
6. ACRE was also asked to consider an application for maize MON 89034 x MON 88017 in which GM events conferring insect resistance to certain Lepidopteran species (MON 89034) and to certain Coleopteran insect pests and herbicide tolerance (MON 88017) have been stacked by conventional breeding. ACRE was content with the molecular characterisation and considered it is very unlikely either would survive outside of cultivated conditions in the UK. ACRE required further information to support the applicant's conclusion that Cry proteins in the GMO are not toxic to non-target organisms at biologically relevant concentrations.
7. ACRE considered an application from the University of Leeds for a trial of GM potatoes to evaluate field resistance to potato cyst nematodes. ACRE did not consider that the dsRNA or ribosomal inhibitor protein produced by the GM plants would have allergenic or toxic effects on human, animal or

environmental health. The committee agreed with the applicant's view that the mechanism of interaction was likely to be specific between the GM potato and the target organism. ACRE was satisfied that the applicant had provided sufficient information to enable the committee to assess the risks associated with the release, but considered that for the site to be considered free from GM volunteers, monitoring should detect no volunteers over two years rather than the three month period proposed. The application was received on 4th January and ACRE agreed finalising its advice after the end of the statutory consultation period in March.

8. ACRE will consider a potato application from the John Innes Centre at its next meeting on 18 March 2010.

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

9. COT has held two meetings since the 3 December 2009. The first was on 15 December, and the minutes can found at

<http://cot.food.gov.uk/pdfs/cotdraftmins15dec2009.pdf>

10. The most recent meeting was held on 2 February 2010 and the agenda contained the following items:

- Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) discussed as Reserved Business
- Horizon Scanning
- Mixtures of endocrine disrupting chemicals
- Chronic Toxicity of Methanol – Introduction
- Draft 2009 Annual Report
- Update on actions taken subsequent to COT advice

Details of each of the above items can be found on COT's website using the link below:

<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotmtgs/cotmeets/cotmeet2010/cotmeet2feb2010/cotagenda2feb2010>

11. On 3 February 2010 a "COT workshop on the evaluation and expression of uncertainties in risk assessment" was held, for COT members and specially invited guests only.
12. COT will hold its next meeting on 23 March 2010,

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

13. The GACS holds its next open meeting on 4 March 2010. Items for discussion include:

Report from the Agency Chief Scientist: Science in the Agency

Report from Andrew Wadge and discussion by GACS to cover:

- the Science and Evidence Strategy, priorities and evidence plan; and
- cross-cutting science and partnerships.

Science in the Scientific Advisory Committees

Discussion on cross-cutting issues and joint working drawing on:

- the report from the COT Chair on a COT workshop on uncertainty and variability in risk assessment;
- a report from GACS lay members on FSA/GO-Science lay members event; and
- a summary of SACs' activities and forward agendas.

Report from Risk assessment/risk management Working Group

Report from Working Group Chair on progress and discussion of next steps.

Update on 'Principles for independent scientific advice' and implications for the Working Group and for GACS.

Horizon scanning

Discussion of the Agency's approach to horizon scanning:

- presentation from Dr Suzy Walton, Chair of the Horizon Scanning Working Group of Defra's Science Advisory Council; and
- update on actions following the GACS horizon-scanning workshop in June 2009.

Review and appraisal of SACs Committees and Chairs

Discussion of proposals for a programme of reviews of SACs and appraisal and feedback on performance of SAC Chairs.

Report from ACAF Chair on the recent quinquennial review of ACAF and ACAF's response.

Future issues for GACS include:

- governance, including risk assessment and risk management;
- Agency science priorities;
- progress on implementing the Agency's Science and Evidence Strategy and Science Performance Indicators; and
- cross-cutting science and evidence.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

Iron and health report

14. The Iron report is being redrafted to take consultation responses into consideration so that the final report can be published in or after April 2010.

Energy Requirements report

15. The scientific consultation on the draft Energy Requirements report ended on 11th February 2010. Details can be found here:

http://www.sacn.gov.uk/reports_position_statements/reports/draft_energy_requirements_report_scientific_consultation_-_november_2009.html

16. The Working Group will consider all consultation responses and amend its report accordingly.

Early Life Nutrition and Later Health report

17. It is anticipated that the draft Early Life Nutrition and Later Health report will be released for scientific consultation in February 2010.

Horizon Scanning

18. SACN held a horizon scanning meeting on 2 October 2009. The agenda and draft minutes can be accessed at:

http://www.sacn.gov.uk/meetings/committee/main_sacn_meetings/02102009.html

Future agenda items

Next meeting (February)

- National Diet and Nutrition Survey (presentation of first year's work).
- Iron and Health report (post consultation).
- Working relationship with EFSA.

June

- Energy report (post consultation).
- Early Nutrition report (post consultation).

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

19. The Social Science Research Committee (SSRC) met in October 2009. The meeting focused on updates on the substantive work streams including:

- the Food Issues Survey;
- the Strategic Partnership with the Economic and Social Research Committee (ESRC) – information about the first project to be commissioned (Food Practices and Employed Families with Younger Children) was presented; and
- literature sources to be included in the Evidence Review on Regulation of Cultures and Behaviours.

20. At the next meeting (April 2010) the Committee will consider the most appropriate analysis of the Food Issues Survey data and discuss the

recommendations from the Evidence Review on Regulation of Cultures and Behaviours.

21. The forward work programme will see the Committee:

- continue to have involvement with development of the Food Issues Survey;
- provide advice about any social science research that may be recommended as part of the Cultures and Behaviours work; and
- provide advice on social science research that may be needed to inform other aspects of the Agency's work, including those sought by other scientific advisory committees.

Appointments and Recruitment Exercises

22. ACMSF currently has vacancies for a commercial caterer and a food research microbiologist. The Secretariat hopes to advertise these vacancies in March.

23. ACNFP has appointed Professor Peter Gregory as its new Chairman and Professor Peter Meyer as a member with expertise in Molecular Biology.

24. Derek Bodey and Robert Smith will take up their roles as consumer representatives on COT on 1 April 2010.

25. COT will be running a recruitment exercise in the new financial year for dietary exposure assessment and environmental exposure experts.

26. COT will also be looking to appoint a statistician specialising in epidemiology and/or modelling approaches.

27. SACN has appointed six new Members and a new Chair, who will replace Professor Alan Jackson in July 2010 when his term comes to an end.

**ACAF Secretariat
February 2010**