

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

56th Meeting of ACAF on 14 December 2011

Information Paper

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

**Secretariat
December 2011**

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 Committee's last meeting was held on 22 September 2011. The following items were discussed:
 - the Committee received a presentation by Professor Sarah O'Brien and Dr Clarence Tam on the findings of the Second Infectious Intestinal Disease study (IID2). The study showed that IID rates in the community had increased since the mid-90's but that presentation to GPs with IID had decreased. The possible reasons for this were discussed. The microorganisms most often associated with illness were *Norovirus* and *Campylobacter*.
 - the Committee received the final report of the Ad Hoc Group on Vulnerable Groups on toxoplasma in the food chain and agreed that, following some minor amendments, the report should be the subject of a public consultation before being published.
 - Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP): Quality, safety and use of digestate in UK agriculture. Dr David Tompkins (WRAP) gave a presentation of this work and sought the ACMSF's views on the microbiological food safety aspects of the report. Following discussion it was agreed that as this was a substantial report, a small group of ACMSF members would be convened to look at it in more detail and address the questions posed by WRAP.
 - *Mycobacterium bovis* and the possible health risks associated with unpasteurised milk and milk products. Further work had been done on this risk assessment since the last meeting in June. Members agreed the conclusions of the risk assessment which were that the risk of human TB infection acquired from unpasteurised milk and milk products has changed with the increase in *M.bovis* in cattle; the risk to human health from *M.bovis* in unpasteurised cows' milk and milk products is very low; and the risk to human health from *M. bovis* in unpasteurised sheep, goat and buffalo milk and milk products is likely to be very low, but due to a lack of data on these species there are more uncertainties associated with this assessment. These conclusions would go forward for consideration by the FSA Board.

- the Committee received a paper prepared by the Secretariat on the role and responsibilities of ACMSF Assessors, Members and the Secretariat, following a recommendation in the quinquennial review of the Committee. There was a suggestion that consideration should be given to the addition of an assessor from the Department of Health (DH) as there were overlapping DH policy interests and responsibilities on many items discussed at ACMSF.
 - an update on the work of the Ad Hoc Group on Foodborne Viral Infections was given. At their meeting in September 2011 the Group focussed on Environmental Health Officers' perspectives on dealing with incidents and outbreaks of *Norovirus*, the HPU response to *Norovirus* outbreaks, environmental monitoring and detection methods for *Norovirus*.
3. The next meeting of ACMSF is scheduled for 19 January 2012.

Advisory Committee on Releases into the Environment (ACRE)

4. There have been no ACRE meetings since 4 August 2011. The next ACRE meeting will be an open one, taking place on 1 December 2011. This meeting will cover an application to trial a GM vaccine against prostate cancer, a research report on veterinary and human medicinal products containing or consisting of GMOs that are likely to be notified for trial or marketing purposes in the next 5 years, and an application for 1829/2003 food and feed approval to import Ms8Rf3 oilseed rape, which has an existing 2001/18 marketing approval but its approval needs to be renewed.
5. ACRE advice was published in September 2011 on a trial of GM wheat modified to resist aphids, by producing an alarm pheromone which repels them. Consent has been granted for the trial to proceed at the Rothamsted Research site in Harpenden, Herts.

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

6. The most recent COT meeting was held on 1 November 2011, agenda items included:
- a draft statement on FSA-funded research and other progress on mixtures of pesticides and similar substances;

- Restriction Report: Proposal For A Restriction
Bis(2-ethylhexyl)phthalate (DEHP), Benzyl butyl phthalate (BBP), Dibutyl phthalate (DBP) and Diisobutyl phthalate (DiBP); and
- EFSA opinion on statistical significance.

7. The next meeting will be on 7 February 2012 in Aviation House.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

8. The SSRC held its eighth meeting on 4 November 2011 in Aviation House. The items discussed were:

- the new SSRC Work Plan;
- Horizon Scanning; and
- updates on project progress and their contributions since March 2011 (Members of the Committee are represented on a number of advisory groups, established to provide strategic advice and peer review on key social projects being undertaken by the FSA).
The updates referred to above included:
 - evaluation of the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme / Food Hygiene Information Scheme;
 - future meat controls;
 - regulatory cultures and behaviours; and
 - kitchen practices.

Veterinary Residues Committee (VRC)

9. The VRC held its first open meeting as an Expert Committee at Aviation House in London on 12 October 2011. Details of the presentations can be found on the VRC web-site as follows:

<http://www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/vrc/>

10. The next VRC meeting will be held on 7 December 2011.

Appointments and Recruitment Exercises

COT

11. The COT is looking to recruit new members with expertise in the following areas:

- environmental exposure assessment;
 - chemical risk assessment; and
 - statistics, particularly related to experimental design, mathematical modelling and/or probabilistic modelling.
12. The closing date for applications was 28 October 2011 and interviews will be held on 7 December 2011, with appointments effective from 1 April 2012.

VRC

13. Three new members have been appointed to the Committee:

Stella Walsh (consumer);
John Points (analytical chemist); and
Jonathan Statham (large animal vet).

**ACAF Secretariat
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