

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

62nd Meeting of ACAF on 9 October 2013

Information Paper

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Secretariat: September 2013

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)

Cross-cutting issue - antimicrobial resistance

2. In July 2013 Members of the new Antimicrobial Resistance Working Group had an initial discussion via teleconference to talk about their terms of reference and the scope of their work in advance of the first meeting of the Group on 9 September 2013. The Group is chaired by Professor David McDowell and includes a member of ACAF and Departmental Representatives from Defra and DH. The next Working Group will take place in March 2014.

Recent agenda items

3. The ACMSF met on 27 June 2013. The main issues discussed were:

- Q fever, raw milk and raw milk products

The Committee received a presentation from AHVLA on progress on research to assess the Q fever risk from the consumption of unpasteurised milk and milk products.

- Freezing chicken livers and Campylobacter

The Committee received a presentation from Dr Mike Hutchison (Bristol University) on the results of research to assess the effect of freezing chicken livers on Campylobacter numbers.

- Infant formula

The Committee was asked to comment on the microbiological risks associated with the preparation of infant formula.

Update on the outcome of the Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group meeting which took place on 3 June 2013, and a presentation from Dr Bob Adak (PHE) on the collection of human foodborne infections denominator data.

Planned agenda items

The following items are expected to be discussed at the next two meetings of ACMSF.

3 October 2013

- paper from the Ad Hoc Group on Raw, Rare and Low Temperature Cooked Foods;
- draft report from the Ad Hoc Group on Foodborne Viral infections;
- review of risk assessment on *Mycobacterium bovis* and meat; and
- report back to main Committee from the subgroup considering amended WRAP composting and digestates report.

30 January 2014

- relative risk ranking of ready-to-eat foods for vulnerable groups with regard to *Listeria*;
- results of UK contribution to EU survey on *Listeria* in cooked sliced meats;
- presentation of a study to establish the foodborne component of infectious intestinal disease (IID2 attribution study); and
- presentation of findings from a street spice curry leaves outbreak.

Committee subgroups

4. A small group of members met to review the amendments made to risk assessments on compost and digestate by WRAP previously commented on by ACMSF.
5. The Ad Hoc Group on Raw, Rare and Low Temperature Cooked Foods is expected to conclude its work in September 2013 and report back to the main Committee on 3 October 2013.
6. It is expected that the draft Report of the Ad Hoc Group on Foodborne Viral infections will be subject to a public consultation once agreed by the main Committee and the Ad Hoc Group will then meet again to consider the responses received before finalising its report.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

7. The last meeting of the ACNFP was held on 12 September 2013. It noted ACAF's comments on the minutes of the discussion about a toxicology study on pigs fed GM and non-GM diets.
8. Items for discussion included the following novel food applications:
 - Buglossoides Oil;
 - 1-methylnicotinamide Chloride (1-MNA);
 - DHA-Rich algal oil from schizochytrium;
 - Phytosterols for use in fat spreads and fat based emulsions with cooking and baking applications; and
 - Chia Seeds.
9. Other items discussed included:
 - uncertainty in intake estimation; and
 - an open event due to take place on 20 November 2013.
10. The next meeting of the ACNFP is scheduled to take place on 20 November 2013.

Advisory Committee on Releases into the Environment (ACRE)

11. ACRE meetings were held on 6 June and 11 July 2013 when the main topic of discussion was finalising the text of three reports in which the Committee is investigating the regulatory framework in which it operates.
12. Report 1, 'Towards an evidence-based regulatory system for GMOs' considers the likely future limitations of the current regulatory framework and whether these can be addressed piecemeal or only via an entirely new framework.
13. Report 2, 'Towards a more effective approach to environmental risk assessment under current GMO legislation' considers a more effective approach to environmental risk assessment within the constraints of the principles set out in the current legislation.
14. Report 3, 'Why a modern understanding of genomes demonstrates the need for a new regulatory system for GMOs' discusses the continuing scientific validity of employing a regulatory system that captures organisms based on how they were produced rather than on their novel characteristics. Following peer-review ACRE adopted the texts of Reports 1 and 3 in July but agreed to make further refinements to Report 2. The three reports have been published on ACRE's website. <http://www.defra.gov.uk/acre/>

15. In June 2013 ACRE published updated advice on the GM wheat release trial at Rothamsted, advising that the additional trial for autumn of 2013 was safe to proceed.
16. In July 2013 ACRE published its report on new techniques in plant breeding, which assessed a number of techniques and whether these fall within the scope of Directive 2001/18/EC.

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

17. The Committee met on 17th September 2013. Topics of discussion included:
 - SACN Review of Vitamin D. Adverse effects of high levels: Vitamin D and all-cause mortality;
 - SACN Review of Vitamin D. Adverse effects of high levels: Vitamin D and Pancreatic Cancer;
 - Complementary Feeding - Second draft statement on the potential risks from high levels of soya phytoestrogens and soya products in the infant diet; and
 - Complementary Feeding - First draft statement of potential risks of α -, β - and γ - hexachlorocyclohexanes in infant diet.
18. COT meetings for 2013 are also scheduled for 29th October and 10th December.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

19. The GACS Annual Report for 2012/13 was published in July and the GACS Chair presented his annual report in person to the Agency's Board at its July open meeting:

GACS report: <http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/gacs-fifth-report.pdf>

Board meeting: <http://www.food.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-work/our-board/board-meetings/board-meetings-2013/13-07-16/board-agenda-130716>

20. The next GACS meeting is on 8 October 2013. Expected agenda items include:
 - report from the FSA Chief Scientist – science in the FSA;
 - science in the SACs;

- review of GACS work plan and discussion of ideas for new working groups;
- presentation on FSA intelligence hub;
- report from the Working Group on Data Exploitation; and
- report from the Working Group on the Use of Science in Emergencies.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

21. The SSRC has agreed the recommendations on the Agency's future quantitative data needs.
22. The Agenda for the 12th SSRC committee meeting which is being held on the 12th October 2013 includes:
 - first report from the Economic and Social Research Council Sub-Group;
 - first report from the Strategy Sub-Group;
 - review of research processes;
 - research priorities update;
 - working with Communications Division;
 - update on recommendations; and
 - review of forward work plan.

Veterinary Residues Committee (VRC)

23. The VRC last met on 18 June 2013. At the meeting, the last results from the 2012/13 Non-Statutory Surveillance Plan were considered together with the results of the 2013 Statutory Surveillance Plan since March. The Committee also discussed the results of the FSA's current 100% testing programme for phenylbutazone in horses submitted for slaughter for human consumption.
24. A further meeting took place on 26 September 2013. Items included further progress on the review of the VRC's Matrix Ranking system, which prioritises pharmacologically active substances and other substances in terms of risk. The VRC has recently published a position paper on antimicrobial resistance which is available on its website: www.vmd.defra.gov.uk/vrc/ and at the September 2013 meeting considered further whether position papers are needed on other topics.

Appointments and Recruitment Exercises

ACRE

25. Prof Chris Pollock - Chairman retired on 31 August 2013 after completing his 10 year tenure. His successor is Professor Rosemary Hails who took up her post on 1 September 2013.

**ACAF Secretariat
September 2013**