DRAFT MINUTES OF THE FORTY SECOND MEETING OF ACAF HELD ON 3 JUNE 2008

Present:

Chairman	Dr Ian Brown
Members	Dr Paul Brantom Mr Tim Brigstocke Dr Dozie Azubike Dr Bruce Cottrill Mr Barrie Fleming Professor Ian Givens Professor Nigel Halford Mrs Heather Headley Mr Richard Scales Dr Nigel Shepperson Mr Marcus Themans
Secretariat	Mr Keith Millar (Secretary) – Food Standards Agency Miss Mandy Jumnoodoo – Food Standards Agency Mr Raj Pal – Food Standards Agency
Assessors	Mr Tim Franck – Food Standards Agency Mr Stephen Wyllie - Defra Dr Glenn Kennedy – Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, Northern Ireland
Officials	Ms Janis McDonald – Veterinary Medicines Directorate Dr Ray Smith – Food Standards Agency Dr Kirsten Dunbar – Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland Mr Gerard Smyth – Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland Mrs Debbie Sharpe – Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland Mr Anthony Higgins – Food Standards Agency, Northern Ireland
Speakers:	Dr Jaume Galobart – European Food Safety Authority

1. The new Chairman introduced himself by providing a brief summary of his career background. He said he was a Consultant Physician in Occupational Medicine and Toxicology at Southampton Universities NHS Trust. Dr Brown is also the Chairman of the Pesticide Residues Committee and a member of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances of the Health and Safety Commission. He noted that he was a former member of ACAF and for a short period of time served as the Acting Chairman following the resignation of the Chairman at that time. Dr Brown commented that he was delighted and honoured to be appointed as Chairman of the Committee.

2. The Chairman introduced Mr Barrie Fleming and Professor Ian Givens who had also recently joined the Committee as the veterinary science expert and the animal nutritionist, respectively. He invited both new members to provide a short background on their career history to date. Mr Fleming informed the Committee that he was a Senior Veterinary Adviser for Elanco Animal Health. He had nine years experience in general practice before moving into the animal pharmaceutical and additive specialism in 2002. He has broad veterinary experience and is a member of several relevant industry committees, including acting as the Secretary to the British Veterinary Poultry Association, a specialist division of the BVA (British Veterinary Association).

3. Professor Givens said that he was Professor of Animal Science and Director of the Nutritional Sciences Research Unit and the Centre of Dairy Research at the University of Reading, School of Agriculture, Policy and Development. Within the University he has responsibilities for managing a large research group. In addition to research on animal nutrition, his work includes the impact of animal derived foods on chronic disease in humans and the potential for their composition to be improved, together with aspects of environmental nutrition. He was also a Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee to the British Nutrition Foundation.

4. The Chairman noted with regret that this was the last meeting for Nigel Shepperson. Mr Shepperson had served as the animal nutritionist Member of ACAF and had provided very useful input into the Committee. The Chairman on behalf of the Committee wished Mr Shepperson well for the future and thanked him for his valuable service on the Committee.

5. The Chairman welcomed delegates to the ACAF meeting and reminded them that there would be an opportunity to ask questions at the close of the meeting.

6. Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Diane McCrea, Dr Gil Domingue, Mr Stewart Herd (FSA Scotland assessor) and also Mrs Jayne Griffiths (FSA Wales assessor).

7. The Chairman invited Members to consider submitting nominations for a Deputy Chairman to act on his behalf when he was unavailable. He asked that nominations should be submitted to the ACAF Secretary by correspondence. All nominations will be considered and an appointment will be made in due course.

8. The ACAF Secretary reminded Members that all meetings were held in open session and that all papers for each meeting were lodged on the ACAF website.

Agenda Item 1 – Declaration of Members' Interests

9. Members of the Committee were asked to declare any relevant changes to their entries in the Register of Members' Interests or any interest in items on the agenda. There were no new interests declared.

Agenda Item 2 – Draft Minutes of the Forty First Meeting (MIN/08/01)

10. The minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2008 were adopted without change. One Member sought clarification on the date for when the AMI was audited under paragraph 32 of the minutes. Mrs Janis McDonald confirmed that the audit had been completed at the end of March 2008.

Agenda Item 3 – Lipgene Project – Current intakes of EPA and DHA potential of animal-derived foods to increase intake

11. The Chairman invited Professor Givens to provide a presentation on the work he was carrying out at the University of Reading as part of the Lipgene Project on the current intakes of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and the potential of animal-derived foods to increase intake.

12. Professor Givens started his presentation by explaining that he was invited to speak following the presentation given by Professor Napier at the Committee's meeting on 5 March 2008. The research work carried out by Professors Napier and Givens was part of the Lipgene project, which is made up of a large consortium of researchers across Europe.

13. Professor Givens explained that the beneficial effects of long chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids were well documented and include anti-atherogenic, anti-thrombotic and anti-inflammatory effects and overall, increased intake lead to a reduced risk of coronary heart disease. Professor Givens also noted that two important bioactive forms of long chain omega-3 fatty acids were EPA and DHA. He pointed out that there were two types of omega-3. The first type is found in plants. However, plants are unable to synthesise long chains containing more than 18 carbon molecules. The other type is EPA and DHA, that can be synthesised from α-linolenic acid which is produced by plants. However, this conversion is low especially in adult males. Professor Givens therefore suggested that long chain omega-3 poly unsaturated fatty acids (EPA/DHA) should now be considered as dietary essentials and he referred to a study carried out by Wang et al in 2006 that supported this conclusion.

14. With respect to the current recommended daily intakes of EPA and DHA, Professor Givens referred to a number of studies carried out in the UK, and other various countries including the USA and Belgium that recommended a daily intake of EPA + DHA between 200 mg/d up to 680 mg/d. Currently, the recommended level of EPA and DHA in the UK is 450 mg per day, which can be achieved by consuming two portions of fish (one oily) per week. Professor Givens also noted that there was evidence that

EPA/DHA could reduce the rate of cognitive decline in the elderly and may have a role in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

15. Professor Givens then explained that researchers have tried to gather information on the current estimates of daily intake of EPA and DHA in Europe but in his presentation, the statistics were based on UK adults with an age range of 19-64. On average, intake of EPA + DHA was 244 mg/d, indicating that the individuals concerned received only about half of the daily recommended in-take of EPA/DHA. Nearly 50mg of this intake was through consumption of meat (mostly through consumption of poultry which is linked to fishmeal included in the birds' diets) and eggs. A report by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) in 2004 noted that 70% of adults did not consume oily fish, leading to the conclusion that the vast majority of the population only consume about 100 mg EPA + DHA per day. The work also showed that consumption of oily fish is higher in older people than in younger groups. Professor Givens noted that although studies showed that the 19-24 age group consumed what was originally classed as oily fish, when canned tuna was eliminated from the statistics (canned tuna is not now classed as an oily fish) there was a drop in the consumption of oily fish.

16. Professor Givens suggested that one of the approaches for increasing intake of EPA/DHA is to encourage people to take fish oil capsules although there was evidence that this would not be done by many. Other approaches include enrichment of milk, meat and eggs, but three criteria are required for this system to work which were:

- consumption by a large proportion of the population;
- enriched animal derived foods would need to be consumed in relatively large quantities; and
- foods being amenable to enrichment.

17. The research that Professor Givens' department is carrying out is on the enrichment of poultry meat with fish oil. He said that bird meat is very responsive to enrichment by EPA and DHA. Also, long chain omega-3 poly-unsaturated fatty acids accumulate in membrane phospholipids; EPA and DHA are relatively more abundant in white meat. Professor Givens' team aim to enrich 200 g of meat with 300 mg of EPA and DHA. Professor Givens drew members' attention to other research, which was not part of the Lipgene project, including that involving fish oil emulsion added during processing of milk, and eggs enhanced by inclusion of linseed oil, in the diets of laying hens. Professor Givens estimated that enrichment of foods had the potential to provide to the UK adult diet a daily intake of EPA and DHA of approximately 230 mg per day, with poultry meat providing the largest amount. However, there are concerns that continued and increased use of fish oils in animal diets is not sustainable. Therefore, alternative approaches are being examined, such as work being carried out by Professor Napier on the genetic modification of certain plants so they will

synthesise long chain omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids from shorter chain precursors.

18. Professor Givens summed up by saying that EPA and DHA should probably be regarded as 'dietary essential'. Estimates of EPA and DHA intake are variable and highly dependant on dietary survey and compositional data. Also, EPA and DHA intake is low for many EU groups, especially the young and lower income sectors. For many, intakes of EPA/DHA from animal-derived foods may be crucial and these foods (especially poultry meat) have the potential for worthwhile enrichment and could increase intake very substantially. Finally, he noted that alternative sources of fish oils will be required and that major changes to the agro-food industry are needed to put the research into practice.

Discussion

19. The Chairman thanked Professor Givens for his interesting presentation. He then invited Members of the Committee to consider whether this project should be monitored by the Committee and to ask questions. One Member noted that the intake of EPA/DHA varies greatly in the population. The Member asked if by supplementing the diet there was an undesirable danger level of EPA/DHA. Professor Givens replied that there was a Lipgene subgroup that was looking into this question and the general consensus was that under normal circumstances there was no danger level. Another Member thought the possibilities of this work were very exciting but that the public's reaction (to supplementation) would need to be carefully considered.

20. In response to a question raised by the Chairman, Professor Givens confirmed that encouragement of plants to produce EPA/DHA involved the use of genes taken from microalgae.

21. One member asked whether the Lipgene Project had considered GM microbes. Professor Givens confirmed this approach had not been considered. He noted, however, that one company was looking at the potential for growing industrial microalgae but the associated costs were high.

22. A Member asked if any information on trends in intakes of EPA and DHA in the human population over the last 20, 30 or 40 years were available and whether trends had changed. Professor Givens said that little information on consumption figures existed prior to the setting up of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS). However, he suggested that fish consumption had declined since the Second World War, although in the last 10-15 years there had been a slight increase in consumption.

23. Finally the Defra assessor asked about the benefits of EPA/DHA supplementation in animal feed and the costs involved. For example was direct supplementation of food more efficient? Professor Givens

acknowledged that direct supplementation of food was more efficient. However, there were legislative and other issues that needed to be overcome before this route could be considered. A group was currently considering cost implications in relation to benefits (e.g. reduced health care costs) of increasing EPA/DHA intakes in the EU population via enriching meat and poultry diets. The outcome of their findings would be known later in the year. Professor Givens agreed to report back at a later stage.

24. In summing up, the Chairman said that the presentation had been most interesting and useful. The view of the Committee was that this work should continue to be monitored by the Committee.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda Item 4 – FEEDAP – Presentation from Dr Jaume Galobart i Cots (EFSA)

25. The Chairman introduced Dr Jaume Galobart i Cots a senior scientific officer in the Secretariat to the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) Panel on additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP). Dr Galobart had agreed to provide the Committee with a presentation on the work of the FEEDAP Panel and of EFSA itself.

26. Dr Galobart thanked the Committee for inviting him to the meeting. He explained that EFSA was established by EC Regulation 178/2002 in 2002 following a series of food scares. The main role of EFSA is to act as an independent source of scientific advice and communication of risks associated with the food chain. There are ten scientific panels covering the wholefood/feed chain e.g. (pesticides, food and feed additives, animal health and welfare).

27. Dr Galobart explained that FEEDAP's mandate was to assess the safety for the animal, the user/worker, the consumer of products of animal origin, the environment and the efficacy of biological and chemical products/substances intended for deliberate addition/use in animal feed. The legal basis for much of the work of the Panel fell under EC Regulation 1831/2003 and its implementing rules, Directive 93/74/EEC (on feedingstuffs intended for particular nutritional purposes) and EC Regulation 178/2002. Dr Galobart explained that prior to the implementation of Regulation 1831/2003, applications for feed additives were submitted by an applicant to a Member State rapporteur which was then evaluated by Member States. The application and assessments were then assessed by the Scientific Committee on Animal Nutrition and the relevant Standing Committee and then authorised at European Commission Standing Committee level. Since the implementation of EC Regulation 1831/2003 applications are submitted to EFSA which provides advice to the European Commission regarding authorisation. Dr Galobart said it can take up to six months for the Panel to conclude their recommendations to

the EC, who have up to three months to take a decision based on EFSA's conclusions.

28. The Panel consists of 21 members with different scientific backgrounds and is supported by about fifteen people who work in EFSA's FEEDAP Unit. Ad hoc experts are invited to attend working group meetings as the need arises. The Panel is independent, and is chaired by Professor Andrew Chesson – a former ACAF member.

29. The Panel carries out its work either in response to requests for scientific advice from risk managers or on its own initiative. Most commonly, and following specific authorisation procedures, the European Commission (EC) asks EFSA to provide scientific advice and evaluate the safety and/or efficacy of a given substance in relation to its authorisation for use in the European Union. Dr Galobart confirmed that in 2006 the European Commission had generated the most requests for scientific advice compared to Member States, and the European Parliament.

30. The Panel members meet regularly in plenary sessions to discuss the work in progress and adopt finalised scientific opinions. Each opinion adopted is the result of a collective decision-making process. Between 2003 -2007 FEEDAP received a total of 185 requests for opinions, of which 131 had been adopted, of this number there had been 82 requests for applications under EC Regulation 1831/2003 of which 44 had been adopted.

31. Dr Galobart concluded by saying that the long term aim for EFSA was to become globally recognised as the European reference body for risk assessment on food and feed safety, animal health and welfare, nutrition plant protection and plant health.

Discussion

32. The Chairman thanked Dr Galobart for his presentation stressing that it was critically important for the Committee to understand the work of EFSA and that the close relationship between EFSA and ACAF should be maintained. He noted that Dr Paul Brantom was an active member of FEEDAP and invited Paul to say a few words.

33. Dr Brantom said that he had been a member of FEEDAP since it was established. It was an active group that rigorously appraised applications when requested to provide assessments. He offered to act as a conduit between FEEDAP and ACAF.

34. The ACAF Secretary thanked Dr Galobart for attending the meeting and noted that the UK was very keen to maintain its ties with EFSA, which he considered to be an extremely valuable touchstone on scientific issues. The ACAF Secretary also drew Members' attention to a conference on silage additives, which had recently been hosted by the FSA on behalf of EFSA.

35. The Chairman reiterated that a close relationship between EFSA and ACAF should be maintained.

Agenda Item 5 – Proposed EC Regulation on marketing and use of feed

36. The Chairman invited the FSA assessor to present ACAF paper 08/08. The FSA assessor explained that the paper outlined the main points of the Commission's proposal on Marketing and Use of Feed and what the Food Standards Agency had so far identified as the main issues.

37. By way of background, the FSA assessor explained that the Commission had issued its proposal at the end of March 2008. It is a draft Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers and therefore will need the agreement of both those institutions. The proposal was previously referred to as the labelling proposal but the title of the Regulation correctly indicated that the proposal extended to other aspects relating to the marketing and the use of feeds. The proposal has been made under the Commission's simplification and modernisation programme, so it seeks to provide in some cases a more flexible approach to legislation where this is consistent with feed safety. The Regulation replaces four existing Directives (on compound feeds, feed materials, bioproteins, and dietetic feeds). Many of the provisions of the proposed Regulation were not new and were reflected in the previous legislation. However, the proposed Regulation introduced a number of new requirements and when adopted would be directly applicable in all 27 Member States of the EU.

38. Additives in complementary feeds and premixtures are not currently subject to maximum permitted levels although when these products are used in combination with other feeds, the maximum permitted levels for complete feeds must be observed. Previously, the Commission proposed that the levels of additives in complementary feeds should be controlled by a range of maximum concentration factors – these relate to the amount an additive in a complementary feed would exceed the equivalent maximum level for that additive in a complete feed. The Committee thought that this was a complicated approach when they considered it in February 2006. The proposal now sets out a simpler approach, which prescribes that complementary feeds should not contain levels of additives more than 100 times the maximum permitted levels in complete feeds.

39. The Regulation will repeal the existing requirement to declare the ingredients of compound feed by their percentage weight of inclusion, which was introduced in 2002 following a number of feed safety scares. The requirement will revert to the previous system whereby ingredients are listed in order of weight but without percentages. However, details of percentages, subject to confidentiality considerations, can be requested by purchasers.

40. Existing labelling rules require the declaration only of certain additives. The draft Regulation proposes that when additives subject to a maximum

inclusion rate have been incorporated into livestock feeds, the label must include information about such additives, including amounts added.

41. One of the novelties of the proposal was the use of codes of practice to supplement the mandatory labelling requirements, and a Catalogue of Feed Material names and descriptions. These documents are to be drawn up by industry and used on a voluntary basis, but would be subject to assessment by the Commission and Member States.

42. The Food Standards Agency had undertaken a public consultation on the proposed Regulation, which ended on 21 May. The Agency was still scrutinising the responses received. However, the FSA assessor reported that respondees from the agriculture and feed industry generally welcomed the proposal. However, they did voice some concerns about the requirement to label all additives subject to a maximum level. There was also concern about the proposal to limit the amounts of additives permitted in complementary feeds, which may affect the use and marketing of nutritional supplements such as boluses (slow release capsules).

43. The FSA assessor said that negotiations had recently commenced and that a Council Working Group meeting under the Slovenian Presidency was due to take place on 9/10 June. He welcomed any comments the Committee had on the proposal.

Discussion

44. The Chairman thanked the FSA assessor for his presentation. He noted that the proposal was a simplification of existing legislation and that the ACAF Secretary was leading the UK delegation negotiations and asked whether he had any additional information.

45. The ACAF Secretary noted that the FSA assessor had provided Committee members with a brief snapshot of the proposal and the negotiations to date. The first negotiation meeting was held on 21 April and the UK delegation had supported the repeal of the percentage declaration of the ingredients of compound feeds. The ACAF Secretary was hopeful that this view would prevail, although the European Parliament had to consider the issue. The ACAF Secretary reported that he had already been lobbying MEPs on the proposals and would continue to do so. He noted that the next Council Working Group meeting to be chaired by the Slovenian Presidency was scheduled for 9 & 10 June. Commencing 1 July detailed negotiations would take place under the French Presidency. It was hoped that negotiations will be completed by spring 2009; otherwise progress will be stalled because of the June 2009 European Parliament elections.

46. The Chairman thanked the ACAF Secretary for the additional information and noted that the proposed repeal of the declaration of percentage ingredients was consistent with a previous view expressed by the Committee. He invited comments from the Committee.

47. One Member asked whether additions could be made to the Catalogue of Feed Materials. The FSA assessor confirmed that the Catalogue would be drawn up by industry in consultation with feed users. The Catalogue would be used on a voluntary basis. However, where a feed business marketed feeds it would need to use the names and description of feed materials in the Catalogue. The FSA assessor confirmed that it was envisaged feed industry organisations would coordinate proposed entries for inclusion in the Catalogue.

48. Two Members raised concerns about the position of boluses, which were an important tool for livestock farming especially in upland and remote farming areas. The ACAF Secretary said that the use of these products might be covered by codes of practice. However, he noted that some Member States wanted to ban the use of boluses.

49. In response to a question on paragraph 32 of ACAF paper 08/08, the FSA assessor explained that bioproteins (novel protein sources such as certain yeasts products from antibiotic production) were currently subject to a prior authorisation assessment. As part of its simplification approach, the Commission was proposing to repeal this requirement.

50. A Member noted that the proposal did not include a requirement for the creation of a positive list of feed manufacturers. This was considered to be a good thing as it would be impractical. There would be too many types of materials used by the feed industry in different Member States.

51. The ACAF Secretary re-stated that the next Council working group meeting was on 9/10 June and if there were any major developments during this or subsequent meetings under the French Presidency, the Committee would be informed via correspondence. He said that the FSA assessor would report back on progress in Brussels at the next Committee meeting in September.

Action: FSA Assessor

Agenda Item 6 – GM Issues

52. Following the departure of the previous Chairman of the GM sub-group, Dr Paul Brantom had assumed this position. He informed the Committee that since the ACAF meeting in March 2008, no matters had been referred to the sub-group for comment.

53. The ACAF Chairman remembered that when he was previously a member of the Committee, the GM sub-group used to assess a large number of dossiers and asked why the Group was not receiving as many dossiers. It was explained that assessment procedures had changed since the ACAF Chairman was last a member.

54. The ACAF Secretary said that the membership of the GM sub-group should be reviewed. He also pointed out that EFSA had a GM panel, which was tasked with assessing all new authorisations. Once EFSA provided the Commission with an opinion on a GM dossier the Commission had 3 months to submit a proposal for consideration by government experts at standing Committee level. There was concern about the asynchronous approval process whereby approval of GM species outside the European Community, took, on average less than nine months; whereas, in the European Community the approvals process took up to two years.

55. The ACAF Secretary also drew the Committee's attention to a GM paper that was on the Food Standards Agency's website that provided statistics on the proportion of animal feed that contained GM material. He agreed to send the Committee an updated version of this paper.

Action: Secretariat

Agenda Item 7 – Matters arising from the minutes of 4 December 2007

Biofuels Position Paper

56. The Chairman commented that the Committee's recently published biofuels position paper was a very good document and glossary of terms. He asked the ACAF Secretary to provide an update. The ACAF Secretary thanked the Committee for their input in drafting the paper, which was a living document that would be reviewed and updated as necessary. This was an extremely topical issue which needed to be carefully monitored. The paper had been drafted in light of, and incorporated, comments from the Committee.

57. The Chairman noted that the Committee would be reviewing the issue of biofuels on a periodic basis especially when second generation products are introduced. One Member commented on an article he had recently seen relating to a suggestion by the Canadian authorities that bioethanol from biofuel production was not suitable for animal feed. He noted that the article contained very little science to support this view.

58. The ACAF Secretary noted that one member had previously suggested that some materials destined for biofuel production may be diverted for animal feed use which may not be suitable for that latter purpose. He then mentioned that there had recently been an incident where products destined for biofuel production had indeed been diverted to animal feeds.

Feed Hygiene Regulation - Financial guarantees

59. The FSA assessor confirmed that the European Commission had published its report on financial guarantees in the feed sector in August 2007. This

had indicated that such guarantees were not immediately available but were technically feasible. At the December 2007 meeting the ACAF Secretary had informed the Committee that members of the FSA's Animal Feed Unit had met representatives of the Association of British Insurers (ABI) to discuss the Commission's report. ABI had subsequently drawn-up a position paper which had been distributed to the Committee. This indicated that the Commission's report was fundamentally flawed and contained many technical inaccuracies. The Commission had promised to initiate a public debate on this issue, but this had not yet been taken forward and there had been no further developments in this area. The FSA assessor agreed to provide an update when more information was received.

Action: FSA Assessor

Agenda Item 8 - Any Other Business

European Commission Review of the Regulation of Coccidiostats and Histomonostats as Feed Additives

60. The Chairman invited Mrs Janis McDonald to provide some background information and an update on this subject. Mrs McDonald reported on the recent publication of the Commission Report on the use of coccidiostats and histomonostats as feed additives. She said that under the Feed Additives Regulation, 1831/2003, prophylactic coccidiostats and histomonostats are authorised as feed additives. EC Regulation 1831/2003 required the Commission to provide a report to the European Parliament and Council concerning a decision on the possible phasing out of coccidiostats and histomonostats as feed additives before 1 January 2012. If such substances were phased out as feed additives, they would not be available in the UK unless the companies marketing the products applied for, and were granted, marketing authorisations to supply the substances as veterinary medicinal products. Mrs McDonald noted that there are currently no authorised histomonostats.

61. In March 2007, ACAF was invited to provide comments on the possible phasing out of these products as feed additives. The Committee agreed that coccidiosis was a serious problem in poultry flocks. Concerns relating to losing these products as feed additives were discussed and the Committee agreed to review its position once the Commission Report was published.

62. Mrs McDonald confirmed that the Commission Report of 5 May 2008 (ACAF Paper 08/11) concluded that coccidiostats and histomonostats should be retained under existing feed additive legislation. VMD had carried out some informal consultation prior to the publication of the Commission Report and put the issue before the Veterinary Products Committee for comment. Having received assurances regarding the quality of the assessment of feed additives and the controls in place, the VPC supported the recommendations in the Commission's Report.

63. Following the VMD informal consultation and advice from the Veterinary Products Committee (VPC), the UK was minded to accept the conclusions in the Commission's Report. However, VMD intended to carry out a consultation of stakeholders with the final decision subject to Ministerial agreement. Part of the consultation is the presentation of the Commission's Report to the Veterinary Products Committee, the Veterinary Residues Committee and ACAF. Mrs McDonald therefore asked the Committee if they would give a formal view on the conclusions of the Report.

Discussion

64. In response to a question from a Member, Mrs McDonald confirmed that if a coccidiostat was phased out as a feed additive, it could be re-authorised as a veterinary medicine but costs related to the marketing authorisation approval could result in reduced availability of products. Once approved the product would only be available on prescription. Therefore, this would be an additional cost for the livestock industry.

65. One Member was extremely pleased with the conclusions in the Commission's report and stressed that coccidiostats were essential, on the grounds that prevention was better than cure. Another Member noted that under the cascade rules for veterinary medicines a product could be applied to a species that it was not originally authorised for, if other products were not available. The Member therefore feared if a product was re-designated as a veterinary medicine there may be an increase in the rise of coccidiostats use in unauthorised species. The veterinary science Member in reply to a question from the lay member noted that although there were herbal products available for the treatment of coccidiosis, these were not feed additives and may not work or be as effective as conventional products.

66. The ACAF Secretary provided further background to the issue. Coccidiostats and histomonstats currently fall under feed additive legislation. However, because veterinary medicine controls were considered to be more robust, the European Commission had intended to make these products subject to controls under veterinary medicines legislation. However, following advice from relevant stakeholders, the Commission concluded in its report to the European Council and Parliament that these products should remain under feed additive legislation. The main reasons for this decision were that the use of coccidiostats as a preventative measure for the control of coccidiosis in modern poultry production is essential and adequately protects animal health and welfare and the environment while providing a fair framework within which operators can do business. Production, without coccidiostats as feed additives, would be severely economically compromised and the effect of not using coccidiostats would be to deprive EU consumers access to poultry, turkey and rabbit meat produced according to the high EU safety and welfare standards.

67. The Veterinary Medicines Directorate had therefore requested the Committee to advise whether they agree with the Commission Report's conclusion that the status quo for coccidiostats and histomonstats should be maintained.

68. All Members agreed that the status quo should be maintained, i.e coccidiostats should continue to be controlled under feed additives legislation.

Information Papers

69. The Chairman drew Members' attention to the following information paper -

- General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS) (ACAF/08/10)

noting that as Chairman of ACAF he automatically became a member of GACS. He agreed to update members following the next meeting of GACS in October 2008.

Dates of future meetings

70. The Chairman informed the Committee that the next meeting would be held on 24 September in the Food Standards Agency's Aviation House offices in London.

ACAF Secretariat
July 2008

Question and Answer Session

George Starrett (Feed Compounders John Thompson)

Mr Starrett commented that the Northern Ireland feed industry was very dependant on importation of feed ingredients as NI was deficient in cereals. He asked if every effort could be used to ensure fast authorisation of new GM varieties in Europe which is vital to the feed industry. He also thanked the Committee for their work on these issues over the years.

Bob Pass (Malt Distillers Association of Scotland and Diageo)

With regard to the proposed Regulation on the placing on the market and use of feed, Mr Pass said that for moist and liquid feeds, the proposals meant that the moisture content of every load would have to be declared with a tolerance of 1.5%. The Association and others have made representations on this to the FSA as such a requirement is unrealistic and the tolerance impossible to achieve. Could the problem be accommodated in the Codes of Practice?

The **ACAF Secretary** said that it would be difficult to insert moist and liquid feeds into the Code of Practice. However, the UK intends to press for the derogation on labelling of moist feeds to be maintained.

John Sloss (Moy Park Ltd)

Mr Sloss asked Professor Givens if the retail trade had been involved in the Lipgene Project or had been asked for their views about supplementing broiler feed with fishmeal or fish oil as a means to increase long-chain omega-3 fatty acids in the meat.

Mr Sloss commented that the Northern Ireland pig and poultry sectors were particularly disadvantaged in not being able to use fishmeal as a useful feed raw material because the relevant government department would not approve fishmeal use in multi-species feedmills which made ruminant feed. This issue needed to be addressed urgently.

Professor Givens replied that retailers had not been already involved with the project. However, recently several major retailers have been approached and have shown interest in future work.