

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE SIXTIETH MEETING OF ACAF HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2013

Present:

Chairman Dr Ian Brown

Members Ms Angela Booth
 Mr Tim Brigstocke
 Ms Ann Davison
 Mr Barrie Fleming
 Professor Stephen Forsythe
 Mr Peter Francis
 Professor Ian Givens
 Professor Nigel Halford
 Mrs Chris McAlinden
 Mr Edwin Snow

Secretariat Mr Keith Millar (Secretary) – Food Standards Agency
 Miss Mandy Jumnoodoo – Food Standards Agency
 Dr Ray Smith – Food Standards Agency
 Ms Abrar Jaffer – Food Standards Agency
 Mr Raj Pal – Food Standards Agency

Assessors Mr Tim Franck – Food Standards Agency
 Professor Glenn Kennedy - Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute
 Mrs Hilary Neathey – Food Standards Agency, Wales
 Mr Stephen Wyllie – Defra

Officials Mr Ron Cheesman – Food Standards Agency
 Mrs Janis McDonald – Veterinary Medicines Directorate
 Mr Stephen Nixon – Department of Agriculture and Rural
 Development, Northern Ireland
 Mr Gerard Smyth – Food Standards Agency in Northern
 Ireland

Speakers: Mr Mark Willis – Food Standards Agency
 Mr David Lowe – Food Standards Agency
 Ms Toni Smith – Food Standards Agency
 Mr George Perrott – Food Standards Agency

1. The Chairman welcomed delegates to the 60th meeting of ACAF and reminded them that there would be an opportunity to ask questions at the end of the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Dozie Azubike, Dr David Peers, Mr Richard Scales, Mrs Karen Robertson (Scottish Assessor) and Mrs Vicki Reilly (Welsh Assessor).
3. The Chairman welcomed Ms Ann Davison (Consumer) and Mr Peter Francis (Farmer) to their first meeting. He invited Ms Davison and Mr Francis to provide a short background on their career history to date. Ms Davison said that she worked for the consumer movement in many roles starting at 'Which'. She had been Defra's consumer advisor, is a member of Defra's Expert Committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF) and chairs the PRiF's communications sub-committee.
4. Mr Francis said he is a mixed arable and livestock farmer and a former dairy producer based in West Wales. He has held many positions within the National Farmers Union, including the county Chairman, dairy committee delegate, rural affairs delegate and is currently the Carmarthenshire delegate on the England and Wales Council.

Agenda Item 1 – Declaration of Members' Interests

5. Members of the Committee were asked to declare any relevant changes to their entries in the Register of Members' Interests, or any specific interest in items on the agenda. Ms Booth informed the Committee that she had been appointed to the Agricultural Industries Confederation Board. Her appointment commenced on 16 January 2013.
6. The ACAF Chairman said that he was a scientific collaborator on the Oxford Martin Programme for the Future of Food.

Agenda Item 2 – Draft Minutes of the fifty-ninth Meeting (MIN/12/03)

7. The minutes were adopted, subject to the following changes:
 - paragraph 4 – last sentence amend 'company' to 'association';
 - paragraph 9 – the ACAF Secretariat to clarify the status of MRSA strain 398 with the Veterinary Medicines Directorate;
 - paragraph 14 – second sentence amend 'AMR is relation' to 'AMR in relation';
 - paragraph 18 – first sentence amend to read that the use of most antibiotics were to treat individual animals for specific infections; and
 - paragraph 21 amend paragraph to remove duplication.
8. The ACAF Secretary requested Members to provide comments on draft minutes prior to future meetings.

Agenda Item 3 – Balance of Competences Review (ACAF/13/01)

9. Mr Mark Willis of the Food Standards Agency's Balance of Competences Review Team explained that the review was an UK-wide exercise in gathering factual information and evidence on the activities of the European Union (EU) and how it affects the United Kingdom. Competence refers to where the European Treaties give the European Union power to act. The EU has very wide competence in relation to food and feed. The form of competence the EU has for food/feed is 'shared', meaning that where the EU has acted individual Member States are normally prevented from doing so.
10. In relation to the 32 reports being carried out over 2 years, Defra and the Food Standards Agency are gathering robust evidence for a report covering animal health, welfare, food hygiene/safety, feed hygiene/safety, food labelling and compositional standards. Mr Willis said that the reviews will not make recommendations. However, the information collected will provide an important evidential base for future policy. The evidence collected will be published.
11. For a successful review a wide level of stakeholder engagement is encouraged including committees, organisations and international trading partners. Mr Willis said that there were no specific Treaty Articles on feed. However, feed law mainly falls under Treaty 43 on the Common Agricultural Policy, Treaty 114 on Internal Market, and Treaty 168(4)(b) on public health, veterinary and phytosanitary fields. The majority of feed law is EU derived and a key question is whether this is in the UK's best interest.
12. Mr Willis asked the Committee to consider whether:
 - the UK benefits from EU level feed legislation for feed businesses; consumers and enforcers;
 - the benefits and disadvantages for trade, consumer protection and incidents handling;
 - the legislation is sufficiently risk based;
 - burdens on businesses are minimised;
 - European processes are proportionate, responsive and transparent; and
 - it would be better for all, or some, legislation to be at national or higher international level.
13. Mr Willis encouraged Members to respond to the call for evidence which was launched in November 2012 and ends on 28 February 2013. The report on Animal Health, Welfare and Food Safety (including feed safety) is expected to be published

in the Summer of 2013. Finally, Mr Willis advised that other reviews being undertaken include one on health.

Discussion

14. Following a question from a Member of the Committee, Mr Willis confirmed that although some countries had carried out similar reviews, the UK was carrying out a more in depth exercise. One Member of the Committee noted that in terms of consumer protection the EU could help provide a belt and braces approach to feed safety. Initiatives such as banning of antibiotic growth promoters, measures that controlled BSE, the establishment of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), and the use of Rapid Alerts for Food and Feed were good examples. Another Member of the Committee supported this statement adding that UK feeding practices may differ from those of other Member States. This could lead to differing response to cases and controls, as was demonstrated in the dioxin incident that occurred in Germany at the end of 2011 which incurred costs for the feed industry. In the case of feed additives, the Commission approach is not always transparent; for example, in the case of EC Regulation 767/2009¹ and declaration of trace elements and their salts. Finally, the Member said that legislation based on EFSA Opinions could be influenced by political considerations. These views were supported by another Member of the Committee.
15. The Committee agreed to provide the ACAF Secretariat with their contributions, which will form a formal response to the call for evidence. The ACAF Secretary noted that all feed law was Brussels based and the benefits of which included the facilitation of intra-Community trade and the combating of protectionism.

Action: ACAF Members

Agenda Item 4 – Review of Official Controls on Feed (ACAF/13/02)

16. The Review Team had provided an intersessional paper (12/06) to the Committee in October 2012. Ms Toni Smith of the Food Standards Agency's Feed Review Implementation team introduced ACAF paper 13/02 said that at the March 2012 FSA Board meeting it was agreed that the Agency would complete a review of the delivery of official animal feed controls. The Review Team analysed key information and data, including reports from recent Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) and FSA local authority audits. Ms Smith noted during its audits of enforcement systems in Great Britain in 2009 and 2011, the FVO had consistency concerns about the quality and quantity of official controls carried out by local authorities. These concerns were also noted in audits of local authorities carried out

¹ Regulation (EC) No 767/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 July 2009 on the placing on the market and use of feed, amending European Parliament

by the Food Standards Agency in 2011 and 2012, and from annual returns on enforcement activity submitted to the Food Standards Agency by local authorities.

17. Ms Smith presented a summary of the Review Team's findings, including the recommendations that were presented to Food Standards Agency Board. Ms Smith outlined that the review implementation team had identified five key workstreams to deliver improvements:

- how official controls can give greater recognition to the use of industry 'own checks' through the use earned recognition and industry assurance schemes;
- local authority regional/national delivery, with improved controls at smaller ports and sampling;
- information and data management;
- liaison with other government departments to reduce footfall and improve intelligence; and
- revision of the Feed Law Code of Practice and relevant training provided.

18. As part of the workstreams, the review implementation team intends holding discussions with local authorities and the various sectors of the feed industry. The Review Team will engage with local authorities to encourage them to find the best workable improvements. Food Standards Agency officials are to meet with the FVO at the end of January 2013 to update them on progress to address their concerns and to ensure that the workstreams are what the FVO is expecting. One of the Food Standards Agency Board's recommendations is for the team to consider the Northern Ireland delivery model. The Review Team will be discussing this with DARD in February 2013. Ms Smith's colleague, Mr David Lowe, informed Members of details of work the team is carrying out on earned recognition; specifically the best way to ensure official controls can give greater recognition to the use of the industry's own checks.

Discussion

19. Following concerns raised by the ACAF Chairman, Ms Smith said that workshops were being run to hear from local authorities on whether feed controls could be co-ordinated on a national or regional basis. One Member of the Committee said that consumer organisations were concerned about the paucity of resources allocated for enforcement purposes. Ms Smith said that the Food Standards Agency was trying to address this issue through greater recognition of the industry's own checks. The ACAF Secretary, responding to a comment from a Member of the Committee, said that the Food Standards Agency's Standards Branch is in the process of updating the

Code of Practice on Feed Law Enforcement, which will be sent to the Animal Feed Law Enforcement Liaison Group for comment. ACAF will also be invited to comment on the revised code of practice via correspondence.

Action: ACAF Secretariat

20. In relation to the slide entitled GB businesses involved in the feed industry, Members sought clarification on the number of feed business operators processing surplus food. Mr Ron Cheesman of the Food Standards Agency's Standards Branch thought that this figure represented anyone putting surplus food into the feed chain; potential feed operators were not included on the list. The ACAF Secretary agreed to clarify what the figure in the presentation represented. In addition, the ACAF Secretary informed Members that he will be chairing meetings with operators of assurance schemes to discuss earned recognition, including the frequency of inspections. He hoped that assurance scheme operators and their auditors would be involved in these discussions. In addition, the ACAF Secretary agreed to keep Members informed on the outcome of these discussions.

Action: ACAF Secretariat

21. One Member of the Committee was surprised that ACAF had not been involved in the review of feed controls². The ACAF Secretary agreed that this topic would be included on future agendas until the work of the review had been completed.
22. Mr Cheesman, in response to a question from a Member of the Committee on a definition of high and low risk, explained that in the Code of Practice on Feed Law Enforcements there is a risk rating system defining the frequency of inspection for different types of feed businesses. The FVO had found that local authorities had targeted only high-risk rated businesses, mainly feed compounders. For this reason the FSA had organised a programme of work by local authorities to all sectors of the feed industry.

Action: ACAF Secretariat

Agenda Item 5 – Feed Safety – potential gaps – awareness and competence of feed business advisers (ACAF/13/03)

23. Mr George Perrott (Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC)) confirmed that the Feed Adviser Register was still under development. The Register is being developed to demonstrate that the livestock sector is improving awareness amongst farmers of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and of the particular farm practices that

² Members received an intersessional paper for comment on the delivery of feed controls in October 2012; in addition Members received an update letter in December 2012 on the delivery of animal feed controls.

will improve efficiency and business performance. This is an attempt to help the UK Government to meet its obligations under the Climate Change Act 2008 to achieve an overall 80% reduction in GHG emissions from 1990 levels across the UK by 2050.

24. In addition, Mr Perrott said that representatives of the agriculture industry had developed a Greenhouse Gas Action Plan (GHGAP) in response to the previous Government's Low Carbon Transition Plan (July 2009). The plan is to be used as the principal mechanism for delivering a reduction in annual emissions in England. As an initial step, the industry partnership published a Framework for Action in February 2010. This described how the sector would aim to meet reductions by increasing production efficiency and thereby reducing emissions per unit of output.
25. The plan will also complement other environmental priorities, such as the protection of water resources, soils and biodiversity. It uses existing trusted delivery routes where possible, for example, recently published sector roadmaps will be important vehicles for changing farm practices to improve production efficiency. This will minimise the potential proliferation of initiatives, simplify the task of delivery and reduce the duplication of effort across the partnership.
26. Mr Perrott acknowledged that there are already precedents set in other sectors of agriculture with schemes such as BASIS³ and FACTS⁴. There are also a number of farm schemes aimed at improving the performance of livestock farmers such as DairyPro⁵ and PIPR⁶. Mr Perrott referred to the BSAS⁷ scheme for professionals operating in the livestock industry. Members were provided with a presentation on BSAS at the 19 September 2012 meeting. Although the BSAS scheme was similar to the proposed AIC scheme it had a slightly different focus. Mr Perrott said that knowledge transfer to livestock farmers is the key area in which the feed industry can assist the livestock farmer to improve environmental performance, and in the vast majority of cases improving feeding efficiency leads to both an improvement in livestock performance and to reduced environmental emissions.
27. While feed safety is not the direct purpose of the Feed Adviser Register, having people providing feeding advice on farm to a standard that improves feeding efficiency, and updating their skills by way of continuing professional development (CPD) can only help. Feed safety per se in the livestock feed sector is managed by

³ (BASIS is an independent organisation set up at the suggestion of the UK Government in 1978 to establish and assess standards in the pesticide industry relating to storage, transport and competence of staff)

⁴ (Fertiliser Advisers Certification and Training Scheme) which is the body responsible for both setting and maintaining standards of advice given by individuals on farm with regard to fertilisers.

⁵ <http://www.dairypro.co.uk/>

⁶ Pig Industry Professional Register

⁷ British Society for Animal Science

way of schemes such as the Feed Materials Assurance Scheme (FEMAS), Universal Feed Assurance Schemes (UFAS) and by enforcement authorities. Mr Perrott said that there are other environmental challenges for the feed sector to face such as the energy use in feed mills, haulage and the choice of feed materials used. These are being addressed in a number of ways at domestic, European and global levels. For example, AIC has a dedicated group regularly reviewing ways of reducing energy use in feed mills and there are a number of bodies, including the FVO, developing methodologies for carbon footprinting of the feed materials used by the industry. AIC is actively involved in a number of such initiatives. Mr Perrott explained that the objectives of developing the Feed Advisor Register are:

- to demonstrate a level of competence in the provision of advice on animal feeding, particularly with respect to GHG performance;
- to include all personnel who provide feeding management advice to livestock farmers;
- to update the skill/knowledge base on a regular basis by requiring individuals to undertake training/CPD to remain on the Register; and
- facilitate and improve knowledge transfer – a critical element to ensure the delivery of improved GHG performance on farm.

28. Membership is for all personnel who provide feed or feed management advice, including advice on feed ingredients, whether provided directly or indirectly to livestock farmers in the UK. However, feed ingredient traders, shippers or forwarders do not need to be registered. The objective of setting entry level criteria is to attract a wide intake of participants including commercial staff, whilst requiring a significant level of competence. This is still being developed, however:

- a minimum of 12 months experience in a relevant job role will be a pre-requisite for membership. Those with less experience can also be members providing they enroll under the “Development” category. This means that for 12 months their advice will be under the direct supervision of a full member of the Register of Feed Advisers. After a 12 month supervised advice period, the person can become a full member, if they are “signed-off” by the supervisor member;
- for advisers to become members, their job content and time served will be verified by their senior manager/director to AIC Services. This method of application to join the Register will be subject to periodic audit;
- for individual practitioners, details of job content and time served will be verified by an independent panel, under the guidance of a steering group; and
- CPD/training will be a critical part of the scheme and at present it is envisaged that all applicants will be required to complete a list of criteria/points (foundation

training) in their first two years of membership, following which the accumulation of CPD points on an annual basis will be required to maintain membership.

29. Mr Perrott said that the scheme will be managed by AIC Services who currently operate the assurance schemes, but the scheme is open to everyone who meets the criteria. Individuals will detail their respective skills (competences) by category of livestock and by category of feed products on which they are providing advice. All members will have to cover criteria (set for ruminants and monogastric animals separately) that will be required by the group establishing the Register. It is likely that a key requirement will be completion of the ‘foundation modules’ in the first two years of membership. As long as the topics are covered there will be flexibility in whether it is done in-house or through the use of external training. Audits of training modules will be conducted to ensure their compliance with the requirements of the Register. Members will be required to gain CPD points from the third year in the scheme. The details of which are still being considered but AIC will publish lists of events, etc. where points can be gained. It has not been decided yet if training modules will be developed by the Register owners or whether it will be left to members to take up relevant CPD. A summary of the benefits of the Register are :

- setting an industry standard of advice;
- ensuring current and future developments are communicated to farmers;
- assurance to farmers on the quality of advice given;
- CPD benefits to individuals and their customers;
- demonstration of a commitment to the GHG Action plan; and
- continual quality improvements can be set.

30. The initial presentation about the Register was made to the industry in February 2012. Since that time AIC has consulted with stakeholders and formed the Feed Adviser Register Working Group. AIC is currently working on the scheme structure, codes and website following which there will be a period of industry and stakeholder liaison.

Discussion

31. In response to a question from the ACAF Chairman, Mr Perrott confirmed that Members did not need to demonstrate their GHG credentials. In addition, it was noted that the AIC had initial discussions with the BSAS but the individual schemes had different focuses – the AIC scheme was aimed at all levels of the feed sector. One Member of the Committee said that there was potential for confusion with the plethora of schemes that were being run by different organisations.

32. In response to a comment from the ACAF Chairman on whether there should be harmonisation of schemes available to the feed sector, a Member of the Committee reminded Members that in previous discussions the Committee did not believe that the proposed feed register would affect feed safety. This was because on-farm incidents were not attributable to advice from third parties.

Agenda Item 6 – Feed Safety – potential gaps – Imports (ACAF/13/04)

33. Mr Franck (FSA Assessor) introduced ACAF paper 13/04. He said that the paper attempted to summarise the main information and issues relating to controls on feed imported from third countries (non-EU countries). The Committee had requested this information following receipt of ACAF paper 11/09 aimed at identifying gaps in feed chain controls. The paper was divided into three sections, the legal measures in place covering imports of feed products of non-animal origin; the main outstanding issues covering official controls of imported feed; and the steps being taken to address these.
34. Mr Franck noted that feed imported from non-EU countries for use in the EU must comply with the same requirements as feed produced in the EU. The Food and Veterinary Office had carried out audits of feed law enforcement in 2009, 2011 (Great Britain) and in 2012 (Northern Ireland). The report of the 2011 audit indicated that significant progress had been made since the previous audit in relation to the arrangements in place at entry points for the identification of imported feed. However, at some major entry points local authorities did not carry out risk-based controls. In addition, the range of analyses carried out on imported feed was limited.
35. Measures put in place to strengthen enforcement of imports of feed from non-EU countries included the annual dissemination by the Food Standards Agency of enforcement priorities for feed authorities, which includes a section on imported feed; the provision of various funds to local authorities to help them set up systems for the enforcement of feed controls and for carrying out sampling and analysis of imported feed consignments; and the issue of various guidance and training for local authorities to assist them in their enforcement role. In addition, the National Animal Feed Ports Panel, which includes representatives of enforcement bodies, discusses and advises on official controls on issues to help resolve common problems and promote a co-ordinated approach. The work being carried out to implement the findings of the Review of Official Feed Controls would also address ways of strengthening controls at points of entry.
36. Mr Franck sought the Committee's views on any gaps in controls or other issues it was aware of and which were not identified in the paper.

Discussion

37. Members commended Mr Franck for an excellent paper in terms of coverage of information and issues. A Member of the Committee explained that the scope of assurance schemes covers imported feed. The level of checks on imported feed undertaken by feed businesses will depend on factors such as the history of compliance, and country of origin. The ACAF Secretary added that under Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council⁸ the feed business operator is responsible for ensuring that food or feed placed on the market is safe.
38. One Member of the Committee commented that the Association of Port Health Authorities is ensuring that ports are working to common standards, and laboratories used by ports are accredited to ISO standard 17025. However, there were still outstanding issues relating to the enforcement of imports and home-produced feeds. The ACAF Chairman asked for further information on controls for imported medicated feed. An official from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) said that there was no evidence that medicated feeds were imported into the UK. The VMD official explained that one local authority had carried out surveillance exercise for a period of a year, and the results did not indicate any evidence of trade in imported medicated feeds or feeds containing coccidiostats. In addition, new testing kits were available that can test for banned antibiotic growth promoters. The kits were being used at UK mills to investigate whether banned antibiotic growth promoters were present.
39. Following a question from the ACAF Chairman, a Member of the Committee said that farms would not usually import feed directly from third country suppliers. It was more usual to buy from a UK supplier of feed materials or from a feed compounder. It was agreed that ACAF paper 13/04 would be updated as necessary.

Action: ACAF Secretariat

Agenda Item 7 – Update on Feed Additives (ACAF/13/06)

40. Miss Abrar Jaffer (ACAF Secretariat) introduced paper ACAF/13/06 which provided an update on feed additives. She said that EU Regulation 1831/2003 controls the use of additives in animal nutrition. These are substances, micro-organisms or preparations, other than feed materials or pre-mixtures that are intentionally added to feed or water in order to perform a range of functions. They have technological (added to feed for example to regulate acidity of the feed), sensory (to make the feed more palatable for animals, or to make the food from

⁸ laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety

animals more appealing to humans), nutritional (to improve the nutrition of the feed for animals) or zootechnical (to, for example, increase bone strength in fish, or reduce phosphate excretion).

41. Miss Jaffer advised the Committee that feed additives authorised under EC Directive 70/524 need to be re-assessed and re-authorised. She described the re-authorisation/re-assessment process which included:

- receipt of documents;
- work on documents;
- preparation of a draft opinion for consideration by FEEDAP; and
- issue of the formal EFSA opinion.

42. Changes to the conditions of authorisation can be possible; for example in respect of particular animal species or categories provided good evidence is presented. Miss Jaffer said that in accordance with Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 on additives for use in animal nutrition, the Commission has established a Register of Feed Additives which is updated daily on line and published twice a year. The Register is divided into two annexes: I - a list of authorised feed additives; and II – a list of orphan additives. The Register can be viewed using the following link:

http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/animalnutrition/feedadditives/comm_register_feed_additives_1831-03.pdf

43. Miss Jaffer explained that orphan additives are authorised additives which have not been supported with re-assessment applications. These additives are currently being withdrawn from the market, generally on a monthly basis. It is estimated that 1500 additives have been orphaned and will have their authorisations revoked. Votes to revoke orphan additive authorisations are taken at monthly meetings of the Animal Nutrition Section of the Standing Committee of Food Chain and Animal Health. Currently, orphaned silage agents and flavours are no longer allowed for use due to their authorizations being revoked. It is anticipated that colours will be the next set of orphan additives that will have their authorisations revoked. However, transitional arrangements over six months will be in place to allow existing stocks of the orphan additives to be used. Miss Jaffer said there was an opportunity for orphan additives to be re-authorised; however, a new application and accompanying supporting data will need to be made.

44. On recent developments with feed additives, Miss Jaffer said that the EU Feed Additives Register had been updated, feed additive authorisations were continuing

with votes for authorisation and revocations taking place in Brussels. Discussions in Brussels are also continuing on amendments to EC Regulation 1831/2003 so that additives can be administered safely to animals via different carriers such as water. In addition, discussions also taking place on how to amend Commission Directive 2008/38, establishing a list of intended uses of animal feedingstuffs for particular nutritional purposes, to include boluses.

Discussion

45. Miss Jaffer said following a question from the ACAF Chairman that re-authorisations should take place every ten years. Dr Ray Smith (Secretariat) added that emergency authorisations can be obtained to protect animal health and welfare. In response to a question from a Member of the Committee, Dr Smith explained that EFSA carries out a risk assessment and provides an opinion which the European Commission will use to propose legislation. The ACAF Secretary added that only the European Commission can draft legislation for voting by Member States.
46. Dr Smith noted that the issue of boluses, which provide a high density of nutrients through slow release to animals, require separate measures. One Member of the Committee said that boluses have huge benefits for farmers. Regarding colourings, (and whether the Food Standards Agency had carried out a consumer attitude survey), Dr Smith explained that there were two types of colours – those that colour animal feed and those that colour food produced from animals fed on specific diets (e.g. salmon flesh and egg yolks). Industry has carried out research on consumer attitudes to colours.
47. The ACAF Secretary stated that pet food was included in feed hygiene legislation and includes feeds for ornamental birds and fish which contain colours to help maintain their distinctive appearance.

Agenda Item 8 – Update of GACS and Scientific Advisory Committee Chairs and Chief Scientific Advisors meeting with Government Chief Scientific Advisor meetings

48. The ACAF Chairman provided members with feedback from meetings of the General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS) and the Scientific Advisory Committee Chairs and Chief Scientific Advisors meeting with the Government Chief Scientist, attended in October and November 2012 respectively. On GACS the ACAF Chairman said that the Committee had welcomed the report on how the FSA had responded to advice and recommendations from the SACs and felt that each SAC should receive FSA updates regularly from its Secretariat, with GACS taking an overview to consider gaps/cross-cutting issues.
49. GACS members also received a report from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition Chair on the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS). Members

underlined the fundamental importance of the NDNS data to the FSA and to other SACs, in underpinning exposure assessment and hence risk assessment for food safety, as well as informing work on diet and health in Scotland and Northern Ireland. GACS Members also received the first report from the GACS Working Group on Science Communication and Engagement - the Working Group will develop a draft final report with recommendations for the FSA for discussion at the GACS spring meeting.

50. Finally, the ACAF Chairman reported that Sir Mark Walport, Director of the Wellcome Trust, would in April 2013 replace Sir John Beddington as the Government's Chief Scientific Adviser. At the meeting of Scientific Advisory Committee Chairs and Chief Scientific Advisors meeting with the Government Chief Scientific Advisor, discussion focused on horizon scanning. The ACAF Chairman said that although SACs attempted to carry out horizon scanning, the process could be improved through the provision of a facilitator.

Agenda Item 9 - Matters Arising from the Minutes of previous meetings

Brominated flame retardants

51. Dr Smith said that at its 14 December 2011 the Committee was provided with a presentation on brominated flame retardants. At the end of the presentation it was noted that European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) was in the process of publishing scientific opinions on a number of brominated flame retardants. Members were provided links to the EFSA opinions on brominated flame retardants on 21 December 2012.

ACAF Forward Work Plan

52. At its 19 September 2012 meeting, Members discussed the Committee's forward work plan. In light of the discussions, the ACAF Secretariat made amendments and uploaded it onto the ACAF website in November 2012. The ACAF Secretariat thanked the Committee for its input.

GM Update

53. The ACAF Secretary said that there had not been any progress in Brussels on extending the tolerance for low level presence of unauthorised GMOs to food, as the last four meetings of the Standing Committee on genetically modified food and feed & environmental risk had been cancelled. He agreed to provide an update as necessary.

Action: ACAF Secretary

Agenda Item 10 - Any Other Business

54. The ACAF Chairman informed Members he had attended, on behalf of the Responsible Use of Medicines in Agriculture, a conference on antimicrobial resistance hosted by the Royal Colleges of Veterinary Surgeons, Physicians and Pathologists (see ACAF paper 13/09 for further details).
55. A Member of the Committee, noting that the Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) are to meet on 31 January 2013, asked whether any ACAF Members will attend this meeting. The ACAF Secretary agreed to send Members the agenda for the ACMSF meeting.

Action: ACAF Secretariat

56. Mr Stephen Wyllie (Defra Assessor) updated Members on the issue of farmers feeding waste milk containing antibiotic residues to calves. Members were informed that the Defra Antimicrobial Co-ordination group (DARC) is scheduled to meet on 12 February 2013. DARC and Defra cattle experts are to work together to formulate guidance for the cattle industry. ACAF Members may be required to comment on any guidance on this issue that is produced.

Date of the next meeting

57. The ACAF Chairman said that the next meeting of ACAF would take place on 8 May 2013 in Bristol.

Information Papers

58. The ACAF Chairman drew the Committee's attention to the following information papers:
- Adventitious packaging material in feed from former foodstuffs (ACAF/13/05);
 - EU Developments (ACAF/13/07);
 - Update on the work of other advisory committees (ACAF/13/08);
 - Antimicrobial Resistance – Summary of Royal Colleges of Veterinary Surgeons, Physicians, and Pathologists conference 2 October 2012 (ACAF/13/09); and,
 - TSE Update (ACAF/13/11).

ACAF Secretariat
March 2013

Question and Answer Session

Stephen Nixon (Department of Agriculture and Rural Development) – thanked the Committee for the opportunity to attend the open meeting. He believed that agenda items 3 (Balance of competences review) and 4 (Review of Official Controls on Feed) were closely linked and that EU interventions in these areas should be considered. Mr Nixon noted that the multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 had set aside 2 billion euros for food & feed issues, including plant health. He observed that whether directed by EU or national requirements, a high standard of feed legislation and controls would need to be maintained to help safeguard the integrity of the UK agri-food chain.

Mr Nixon noted that the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) had issued a press release on the use of Chlortetracycline in Calf Milk and Calf Milk Replacer. In the press release, the VMD clarified that there are no chlortetracycline veterinary medicinal products authorised for incorporation into dry calf milk replacers or for reconstitution in milk.