

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

67th Meeting of ACAF on 19 June 2015

Information Paper

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

**Secretariat
June 2015**

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)

Subgroups

2. The Antimicrobial Resistance Working Group met on 24 February. Agenda items included:
 - a presentation on the paper “the prevalence of Salmonella Genomic Island 1 variants in human and animal Salmonella Typhimurium DT104 are distinguishable using a Bayesian approach”;
 - an update on progress report on the UK 5 year Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) strategy;
 - an update on systematic review of contribution of food in AMR;
 - presentation on the work of Joint Interagency Antimicrobial Consumption and Resistance Analysis;
 - Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus in the food chain and Livestock Associated Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus in meat;
 - an update on the activities of Defra Antimicrobial Resistance Coordination and the work of the AMR funders group; and
 - a new Ad Hoc Group on Eggs also met for the first time on 24 February 2015 to discuss their terms of reference.
3. The next meeting of the full Committee will be on 25 June 2015.

Report

4. The ACMSF’s report “An update on viruses in the food chain” was published on 25 March 2015 alongside a report on foodborne viruses from the FSA Chief Scientific Adviser. A link to the news story and reports can be found here:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/news-updates/news/2015/13762/two-reports-on-viruses-in-the-food-chain-published-today>

Advisory Committee on Releases into the Environment (ACRE)

5. ACRE met on 19 March when it had a preliminary discussion on recommendations of the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee report “Advanced genetic techniques for crop improvement: regulation, risk and precaution.” The report recommends that ACRE’s remit

should be expanded to cover all novel plant traits, not just GMOs, and that ACRE should establish a citizens council to advise on social and ethical aspects. Defra will consider the recommendations and respond to the report in due course. The committee noted that if ACRE's remit was extended extra resources would need to be made available.

6. The ACRE triennial review was published in March 2015. These reviews are a standard requirement for Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPBs) and aim to provide a robust challenge to the continuing need for the NDPB and to check whether its functions and form are appropriate. The report recommends it is appropriate for ACRE to continue in its present form as an advisory NDPB.
7. ACRE considered at its March 2015 meeting an application for a trial in Northern Ireland of a GM vaccine against typhoid fever and enterotoxigenic E.coli. ACRE was content that the hazards associated with this trial had been fully characterised and that appropriate risk management measures were in place to ensure that there would be negligible risk to human health and the environment.
8. ACRE also considered a paper on maize pollen deposition in relation to distance from the nearest pollen source under common cultivation, analysing the results of 10 years of monitoring. ACRE considered that the study was well conducted but that the authors had exaggerated the significance of their analyses. Members felt this research has limited direct value for devising separation distances that would allow the coexistence of GM and non-GM crops.
9. ACRE discussed the findings of its Harm Sub-group, established in early 2014 to consider how environmental risk assessment of GMOs could be based on a more coherent understanding of environmental harm in its broader agro-ecological context. The sub-group is now coming to the end of its work and it updated ACRE on its progress since the last ACRE meeting, which has focussed on developing a framework for assessing harm. ACRE considered that the approach the sub-group is developing provided a useful way of structuring relevant evidence in order to focus attention on key information needed to assess harm, and suggested other relevant work that might inform the tools being developed. The sub-group agreed that it would now focus on writing up its conclusions.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

10. The last meeting of the ACNFP was held on 29 April. Items discussed included novel food applications on:
 - chia seeds to extend the use to fruit juice and fruit juice blends and to increase the number of companies who are authorised to market it;
 - oligonol – to be used in a range of foods as an alternative source of polyphenols;

- synthetic-hydroxytyrosol - to be added to fats and oils, to be consumed uncooked and also to fruit and vegetable juices;
- alginate-konjac-xanthan polysaccharide (PGX) - to be added as a source of dietary fibre in dietary supplements as well as in a range of foods and beverages; and ;
- synthetic L-ergathionine - authorisation was being sought to include the novel ingredient in food supplements, food for specific groups (PARNUTS foods) and a number of commonly consumed foods including non-alcoholic drinks, milk, cereal bars, ultra-fresh dairy products(yogurts, fresh cream and cottage cheese) and chocolate.

11. The next meeting of the ACNFP is scheduled to be held on 2 July 2015.

The Committee on Carcinogenicity (COC)

12. The COC met on 23 March 2015.

13. The Committee continued its assessment of alcohol and cancer with reviews of the risk of cancers of the oral cavity and/or pharyngeal cancer, laryngeal cancer, oesophageal cancer and head and neck cancer. It further considered how to approach the burden of cancer attributable to alcohol consumption, and discussed a recent paper on a comprehensive dose-response meta-analysis of alcohol consumption and site specific cancer risk. The Committee's advice on alcohol and cancer will be published in a statement in due course.

14. The Committee considered a request from the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes for advice on the potential carcinogenicity of a novel food ingredient cycloastrogenol.

15. The COC also reviewed a draft of its Annual Report for 2014, which will be published jointly with those of the COT and COM, on the COT website.

16. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 9 July 2015.

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

17. The COT held an out of town meeting on 17 March 2015 in Birmingham and the following agenda was discussed;

- submissions for the reformulation of nonivamide (PAVA) and 2-chlorobenzylidene malononitrile (CS) as incapacitant sprays;

- second draft statement on potassium-based replacements for sodium chloride and sodium-based additives;
- soya phytoestrogens and thyroid; and
- paper for information: Response to EFSA caffeine consultation.

18. There was also a COT Symposium on Potential implications of obesity on the kinetics of persistent organic pollutants and possible ramifications for the risk assessment process on the 18 March in Birmingham.

19. The next COT meeting is due to be held on 30 June 2015.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

20. GACS met on 31 March 2015. This was the first meeting of the FSA's new Director of Science, Evidence and Research, Dr Penny Bramwell. Items discussed at the meeting included:

- report on FSA Science;
- scientific staffing, skills and professions in the FSA;
- science in the Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs);
- an update on FSA Science, Evidence and Information Strategy;
- future work on the Joint GACS-SSRC working group on the use of evidence; and
- FSA evidence portfolio.

21. The next GACS meeting will be held on 1 October 2015, details of which will be available on the GACS website website;

<http://gacs.food.gov.uk/gacsmeets>

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

22. The SSRC had its fifteenth meeting on 11 March 2015. Agenda items discussed included:

- Update on the FSA Strategy and Science, Evidence and Information Strategy by Professor Guy Poppy
- Discussion about future horizon scanning
- Fourth report from the ESRC Sub-Group
- Fourth Report from the Strategy Sub-Group

- Update on the SSRC Economics Working Group
- Presentation on Food and You secondary analysis: work so far
- Research priorities update - vulnerable groups

23. The next meeting of SSRC is on 28 September 2015.

24. Papers will be published on the SSRC webpages two weeks prior to this date.

<http://ssrc.food.gov.uk/meetings>

Appointments and Recruitment Exercises

Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

25. Interviews took place on 3 March for 2 new members, to provide expertise in virology and in food retailing.

Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment ACRE

26. The terms of 6 ACRE members are due to end in 2015 the ACRE Secretariat will seek views from new ministers on reappointments or recruiting replacements.

**ACAF Secretariat
June 2015**