Working Groups 2024

In this guide

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Joint ACNFP/COT Working Group on Cannabidiol (CBD)

1.192 A joint Subgroup of the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) and COT was formed to address a series of questions in relation to the safety of Cannabidiol (CBD)-containing and hemp-derived ingredients. The overarching aim of the Subgroup is to enable the FSA to perform risk assessments for CBD in food.

1.193 The group has now reviewed the group A ‘pure’ compounds and established an provisional ADI for pure form CBD (>98% purity) of 0.15 mg/k bw/day (10 mg/day for a 70 kg adult) as set out in a joint statement.

1.194 The group is continuing to review the different purity groups of CBD products including considering the less pure group of B compounds and a lower

proportion of CBD including “Group C products” which are products that contain between 2.5 and 67% CBD.

Plant-based drinks

1.195 Plant-based drinks have become increasingly popular in the United Kingdom (UK) both for individuals with an allergy to cows’ milk or lactose intolerance and those who wish to avoid dairy products for other ethical or cultural reasons. Three such drinks were reviewed by the Committee, with a statement being published in 2022.

1.196 The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) have also considered these drinks from a nutritional perspective. To bring these two strands together, a joint Working Group was established to undertake a benefit risk-assessment of soya, oat and almond drinks as replacements for cows’ milk. The Working Group started work in December 2021 with a draft report being published for peer review in 2024. It is hoped that the final report will be published in 2025.

PFAS Subgroup

1.197 The COT subgroup on per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) was set up to provide guidance to UK Government Departments and Agencies to support human health risk assessments of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) where exposures to existing and legacy PFAS is occurring through food, drinking water and other environmental media.

1.198 The subgroup held one meeting in 2024, which considered the evidence on thyroid effects and liver effects of PFAS. Further papers on other endpoints will be considered in 2025 and beyond.

Titanium dioxide (TiO2) subgroup

1.199 The TiO2 subgroup had been set up to develop and simultaneously sign off on the text of the statement. The group had three meetings at the start of 2024 and due to the work of the subgroup the statement was signed off by the Committee at the May meeting. An executive summary and the full statement were published in 2024 along with a lay summary of the statement.

Smoke Flavourings Working Group

1.200 Smoke Flavourings Working Group (SFWG) continue their assessment and started phase 3 assessment of these flavourings (conclusions on genotoxicity, assessment of general toxicity and Extended One Generation Reproductive Toxicity (EOGRT)).

1.201 The SFWG have also discussed a weight of evidence update paper to be used in their assessments.

ORO and ABB decisions

1.202 FSA Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) and Joint Expert Groups (JEGs) that support the regulated products service, a ways-of-working paper (as TOX-2024- 10 for COT) was presented to Members. This explained two additional ways in which the FSA would be assessing regulated products. These updated ways of working were 1) the use of other regulator’s opinions by the FSA (ORO) and 2) the use of an ‘abbreviated process’ (ABB) for safety assessments. These processes involve internal assurance via an FSA decision panel that is chaired by a senior leader from the Risk Assessment Unit with regular oversight from the FSA Chief Scientific Advisor. Applications progressing through these assessment routes would not routinely be considered by SACs, but a summary of the applications would be periodically presented to the COT for information.