

Meeting

# March 2025

**Paper for Information.**

## **Scientific Advisory Committees (SAC) Summary of recent activities**

This document summarises the recent activity of the FSA's Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs). We highlight topics discussed at the most recent meeting and agenda items for the next meeting.

## **Scientific Advisory Committees (SAC) Summary of recent activities**

### **Science Council**

**Updated:** October 2024.

**Last open meeting:** March 2024.

#### **Summary**

- Workshop with experts to discuss the “Future of Food Safety” and shortlist 51 key questions within the FSA strategy to deliver food consumers can trust. By this we mean a food system in which:
  - [Food is safe](#)
  - [Food is what it says it is](#)
  - [Food is healthier and more sustainable](#)
- The report of this workshop will be published in the first quarter of 2025.

**Next open meeting:** March 2025.

**Interim Chair:** Professor John O'Brien.

**Secretariat:** [sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk](mailto:sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk)

**Website:** [science-council.food.gov.uk](https://science-council.food.gov.uk)

## **Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)**

**Updated:** March 2025.

**Last meeting:** 9th July 2024.

**Last meeting:** 9th July (13<sup>th</sup> plenary), key discussion items included: maximising the impact of the [Kitchen Life 2 project](#), the biennial [FSA business tracker survey](#), the evidence base for assessing the impact of regulatory reform, and, understanding changes to, and drivers of, trust in the food system.

Four working groups are currently active, supporting the development of a range of research activity, from the evidence behind the 2024/25 Spending Review business case, to supporting changes to the FSA consumer monitoring surveys. The wider consumer interests working group has recently completed a piece of work outlining the available evidence around consumer knowledge, beliefs and practises around UPFs, [Executive Summary | Advisory Committee for Social Science](#).

The **next open meeting** (14<sup>th</sup> Plenary) of the ACSS will be an in person meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Chair:** Julie Hill.

**Secretariat:** [acss@food.gov.uk](mailto:acss@food.gov.uk)

**Website:** [acss.food.gov.uk](https://acss.food.gov.uk)

## **Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)**

**Updated:** 6<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**ACNFP committee meetings Sep 2024 - March 2025:** 17&18 Sept 2024; 20 Nov 2024; 5&6 Feb 2025. Number of CADs progressed/discussed in these meetings:

- Normal Business: 8 CADs (of which 2 were reviewed a second time intersessionally).
- CBD: 8 CADs (of which 1 was reviewed in 2 meetings).

- GMO/PBO: 4 CADs.
- THC draft statement on delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol agreed (2 meetings).
- Open session on Cell Cultivated Products discussing the associated hazards and their uncertainties and how these applications will be assessed (initial discussions in a previous meeting).

**Next meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 (Virtual).

## **Products of Genetic Technologies Subcommittee (PGT)**

### **PGT Subcommittee**

**Updated:** 6th March 2025.

**PGT meetings:** Sep 2024 - March 2025: 8<sup>th</sup> Oct 2024, 11<sup>th</sup> Dec 2024, 4<sup>th</sup> Mar 2025 - The Sub-Group is chaired by ACNFP Member Andy Greenfield.

**Highlight:** Safety assessment of seven applications discussed in these meetings:

- 6 had data gaps requiring further information from applicant.
- 3 required additional expertise not represented in PGT – expertise in fish veterinary sciences was commissioned for 2 of these; yeast expertise and toxicology expertise are being sought for the last one.
- 6 CADs were discussed, out of which 3 progressed to ACNFP.
- Nature of the GMOs assessed: new events, and stacks of GM events; some new types of traits (nutritional); first GM micro-organism; upcoming CRISPR generated GMO with interesting insert.

### **Other work:**

- Discussion on the challenges resulting from the expression levels of the newly introduced proteins in the safety assessment of some GMOs.
- Advice on suitability of an FSA internal safety assessment based on other regulator opinion (ORO) for one further GMO application to ensure its safety.
- Note: The FSA [draft PB Technical Guidance for Applicants](#) was published on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025, two days after the [draft Genetic Technology \(Precision Breeding\) Regulations 2025](#) were laid before Parliament. This benefited from input from PGT Members (collectively or as individuals) from December 2023 till May 2024.

Next meeting (PGT18): TBC.

# **Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes and Committee on Toxicity on CBD and Hemp Derived Products**

## **CBD Subgroup**

**Updated:** 6th March 2025.

**Joint ACNFP-COT CBD Sub-Group meetings:** 11 Sept 2024 (0.5 day); 6 Nov 2024 (0.5 day); Final meeting of this sub-group 22 Jan 2025 (0.5 day). This sub-group is Chaired jointly by ACNFP Chair Camilla Alexander-White and COT Chair Alan Boobis. The work of this sub-group has been completed over approximately 2.5 years. The major outputs are;

- a) Scientific advice on a safe 10 mg/day intake of Group A >98% pure form CBD ingredients; FSA guidance published in October 2023, the first of its kind in the world. Ongoing phase 2 review of data Oct 2023-Dec 2024, assuring guidance remains sound.
- b) A review and development of health-based guidance of THC as a controlled substance in food. Document being reviewed by ACNFP and COT before publication in 2025.
- c) A review of data for Group B CBD ingredients (mixtures of cannabinoids). Advice to ACNFP to treat applications on a case-by-case basis.
- d) A review of Group C – hemp derived ingredients. Advice to ACNFP to treat applications on a case-by-case basis.
- e) Collation of all original toxicology study data in a ‘CBD evidence base’ for the FSA to build upon going forward.
- f) A brief to FSA leadership on the contradiction between scientific and legal requirements to assure the safety of CBD under Novel Foods Regulation.

**ACNFP-COT Subgroup meeting January 2025: Final official meeting of the Subgroup.** members reviewed the toxicological profiling of Group C CBD and hemp derived products. The next steps for the group were confirmed and the safety of these applications will be sought in upcoming meetings from the

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) and Committee on Toxicity (COT).

The subgroup discussed development of a database of the data supplied to support novel food applications for CBD, including a review of a previously discussed group A application. This will support formation of a database in the next few months. A review of Lachenmeier *et al* 2023, which is a published paper outlining an alternative approach to identifying an ADI for CBD was reviewed. Comparison was made to the approach in the joint ACNFP and COT statement. It was agreed to add the paper to the wider dataset on highly purified CBD.

Next ACNFP-COT meeting: N/A, as the work of the Subgroup has now ended no further official meetings will be held. Advice from members will still be sought whilst the CBD work is ongoing, however.

**Recruitment process** for four new ACNFP members (December 2024).

**A new ACNFP-CPP sub-group (2025-2027):** Discussions were held in November to finalise the scope and terms of reference for a new ACNFP subgroup on cell cultivated products (ACNFP-CCP). The subgroup will be supporting the FSA in testing out new types of assessment for CCPs, as part of a government sponsored regulatory sandbox project in this new area of food innovation. The Sub-Group will be Chaired by ACNFP member Huw Jones. An open session will be held on 5 February to inform the subgroup's work, which will start in February 2025 for a 2-year duration.

**Next ACNFP meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025 (Virtual).

Next ACNFP-PGT meeting: 13<sup>th</sup> May 2025, in person and dial in.

**Chair:** Dr Camilla Alexander-White.

**Secretariat:** [acnfp@food.gov.uk](mailto:acnfp@food.gov.uk)

**ACNFP Website:** [Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes | Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes](#)

## **Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)**

**Updated:** 4th March 2025.

**Last meeting:** 06 February 2025

The Committee's 108<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting was on the 6th of February 2025.

Anne Gravett (FSA) gave an update on Root Causes Analysis.

Lorcan Browne (FSA) gave an update on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza B3.13.

Transmission of AMR *Campylobacter* and *Escherichia coli* during the processing of chicken meat (Bukola Onarinde, University of Lincoln)-Reserved business.

EFIG summary report (Anthony Wilson, FSA) – Reserved Business

IID3 update (Erica Kintz, FSA) - Reserved Business.

### **Committee Updates**

- Listeria working group

**Next meeting:** 18 -19<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

**Chair:** Professor Bill Keevil

**Secretariat:** [acmsf@food.gov.uk](mailto:acmsf@food.gov.uk)

**Website:** [acmsf.food.gov.uk](https://acmsf.food.gov.uk)

## **Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs (ACAF)**

**Updated:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

**Last meeting:** 12th February 2025.

### **12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 ACAF Meeting Summary**

- Minutes discussed from the last meeting, any changes that need to be made have been noted.
- Dossier for assessment RP1592 Interban – sections of the application were reviewed, with the resulting sections to be reviewed at the April meeting.
- Dossier for assessment RP2156 Copper lysinate sulfate – the application was reviewed, and the applicant will be asked to provide further information.
- Dossier for assessment RP2157 Bovacillus 10 and Bovacillus WS - the application was reviewed, and the applicant will be asked to provide further information.
- Extrapolation of efficacy RP2158 Enviva PRO 202 GT – the application was reviewed and applicants agreed that conclusions could be extrapolated from

turkeys for fattening to turkeys reared for breeding.

- Reviewed the RFI response for RP1696.
- A draft opinion was evaluated for RP1275.
- Members were given a brief overview of the upcoming titanium dioxide assessment and what to expect.

**Next meeting:** 3rd April 2025.

**Chair:** Professor Nicholas Jonsson

**Secretariat:** [acaf@food.gov.uk](mailto:acaf@food.gov.uk)

**Website:** [Advisory Committee on animal feedingstuffs](#) | [Advisory Committee on animal feedingstuffs \(food.gov.uk\)](#)

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

**Updated:** February 2025.

**Last meeting:** 4<sup>th</sup> February 2025.

### **Topics discussed included:**

At their February meeting the Committee reviewed 2 reserved items:

- A joint position paper from the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) & Committee on Toxicity (COT) on establishing a Safe Upper Limit for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol ( $\Delta$ 9-THC) and its precursor as contaminants of hemp-derived products and CBD novel foods Draft Statement (Reserved).
- A draft Committee Advice Document on the recycled poly (ethylene terephthalate) decontamination process for use in the manufacture of materials and articles in contact with food RP 1862 (Reserved).

They continued their work on the maternal diet with a discussion on [mercury](#) and considered further information on deriving a health-based guidance value for [antimony](#) to support development of UK Drinking Water Standards.

In addition, they reviewed 2 requests for comment on EFSA's Public Consultations:

- The EFSA Panel on Food Additive and Flavourings (FAF) 'Draft guidance on the preparation of an application for authorisation of a food additive submitted under 4 Regulation (EC) No 1331/2008' TOX/2025/05.
- EFSA Draft Guidance for Public Consultation: Draft guidance document on the submission of data for the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin intended for human consumption [TOX/2025/08](#).

Finally, the Committee discussed the [draft 2024 Annual report](#), 2025 [horizon scanning](#) and potential topics for the annual COT workshop.

**Next meeting:** 25th of March 2025.

**Chair:** Professor Alan Boobis

**Secretariat:** [cot@food.gov.uk](mailto:cot@food.gov.uk)

**Website:** [Committee on Toxicity | Committee on Toxicity \(food.gov.uk\)](#)

## **Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)**

**Updated:** December 2024.

**Last meeting:** November 2024.

- Horizon scanning.

**Next meeting:** 13th March 2025.

**Chair:** Professor David Harrison

**Secretariat:** [COC@phe.gov.uk](mailto:COC@phe.gov.uk)

**Website:** [committee-on-carcinogenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment](#)

## **The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)**

**Updated:** October 2024.

**Last meeting:** 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024.



Horizon scanning- presentations on Computational methods and mutagenicity and on Artificial Intelligence and mutagenicity data.

Guidance statement on the use of Quantitative Structure Activity Relationships (QSAR).

**Next meeting:** TBC.

**Chair:** Prof Gareth Jenkins.

**Secretariat:** [COM@phe.gov.uk](mailto:COM@phe.gov.uk)

**Website:** [committee-on-mutagenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment](https://www.gov.uk/government/committees/committee-on-mutagenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment)

## **Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)**

**Updated:** December 2024.

**Last meeting:** 21st November.

**Meeting focus:** horizon scanning, processed foods, sweeteners, plant-based drinks.

**Next meeting:** 13th March 2025..

**Chair:** Professor Ian Young.

**Secretariat:** [SACN@dhsc.gov.uk](mailto:SACN@dhsc.gov.uk)

**Website:** [scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition](https://www.gov.uk/government/committees/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition)