

Update on the work of other Scientific Advisory Committees- January 2026

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: January 2026.

Summary of work

- **'Wider impacts beyond food safety risk assessment' project workshop** on 22 April 2024: This project was commissioned to advise on the practicalities of including impacts outside food safety in FSA decisions. This workshop brought together external experts across a range of disciplines to review exemplar case studies of a range of possible novel foods/processes, establish the key wider impacts, what information is needed to assess these and where collaboration would be needed with other Government Departments on impacts of joint interest. The final report of this project was published, along with its recommendations, in November 2024 on the [Science Council website](#).

- ‘**Artificial Intelligence (AI) in food assurance**’ project workshop was held on 9 June 2025 to support their project on AI use in food safety and authenticity. Science Council hosted this expert elicitation workshop with experts across a range of sectors including academia, the food manufacturing and AI industry to discuss the use of AI in food safety/authenticity assurance. A report of this project was published on 28 October on the [Science Council website](#) and contains recommendations to the FSA on the use of AI in assuring food safety and authenticity.

Next plenary meeting: April 2026.

Interim Chair: Professor John O'Brien.

Secretariat: sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk

Website: science-council.food.gov.uk

Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)

Updated: October 2025.

Last meeting: 1st October (15th plenary), key discussion items included:

- Analytic Unit Update.
- Working groups updates (Assurance, Understanding Regulatory Change, Economics, Wider Consumer Interests).
- Science Council update.
- F&Y2 - Declining response rates and the impact on representation.
- F&Y2 - Opportunities for further analysis and reporting.
- External expertise mapping.
- FSA research and evidence priorities: Foodborne disease.

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.

We held a joint meeting with DEFRA's Social Science Expert Group, and the British Academy, around “Food systems futures: System challenges, policy solutions and threats” in May 2025

Next open meeting (16th Plenary) of the ACSS will be in April.

Chair: Julie Hill.

Secretariat: acss@food.gov.uk

Website: acss.food.gov.uk

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

Updated: 8th January 2026.

- **ACNFP Committee meeting 19th November 2025:** A successful hybrid meeting was held reviewing 4 full novel food applications for precision and biomass fermented products (β -lactoglobulin RP1571, Solein RP1326, *Fusarium str. flavolapis* RP1637 and Fermotein RP1215). Members identified data gaps, according to the expectations of EU Novel Foods Technical Guidance that has been retained in England and Wales post Brexit, for all four applications and advised that safety could not be fully assured at this stage.
- **ACNFP-PGT Subcommittee meeting - 9th December 2025** - Successful meeting, where advice was received on the assessment of two new GM applications (Soybean RP2261 and Maize RP2288). Technical details of some RFIs were discussed. The Subcommittee also discussed the assessment of precision bred organisms using some case studies to support the preparations for the new precision breeding regime.
- **ACNFP-CCP Subgroup meeting 20th January:** Meeting of the CCP Subgroup scheduled for 20th January 2026 to support the development of guidance addressing the identity, production process and microbiological elements of CCP safety assessment.
- **ACNFP-CBD sub-group:** it should be noted that this sub-group concluded its formal work as a group in January 2025. However, if new scientific information becomes available, expert members from ACNFP and COT will be reconvened ad hoc to advise the FSA on the relevance of the new work to the FSAs conclusions and advice on CBD.

Next ACNFP meeting: 11th and 12th February 2026 (Hybrid).

Next ACNFP-PGT meeting: 27th January 2026 (Virtual).

Next ACNFP-CCP Subgroup: 20th January 2026 (Virtual).

Secretariat: 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: 10th November 2025.

Last meeting: 23rd October 2025.

The Committee's 110th plenary meeting was on the 23rd of October 2025.

Elaine Pegg (FSA) presented analysis from the Committee Expertise review.

Paul Turner, (University of East Anglia) gave an overview of the Health Protection Research Unit.

Development of trend analysis guidance (Svetlozara Chobanova, FSS) - Reserved business.

Food attribution by pathogen, proposed expert elicitation exercise - (Darren Holland, FSA) – Reserved business.

Extraordinary EFIG update (Anthony Wilson, FSA) – Reserved Business.

IID3 update (Aileen Mill, Newcastle University) - Reserved Business.

C. botulinum in cattle withdrawal period discussion (Stephen Wylie, APHA) – Reserved Business.

Next meeting: 5th February 2026 in London. Agenda to be confirmed.

Chair: Mr Alec Kyriakides

Secretariat: acmsf@food.gov.uk

Website: acmsf.food.gov.uk

Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs (ACAF)

Updated: 18th December 2025.

Last meeting: 10th December 2025.

10th December 2025 ACAF Meeting Summary

- Discussion on the coccidiostats and antimicrobial resistance.
- Reviewed the RFI responses for RP1592, RP2187, RP2247, RP2252 and RP2258.
- Members reviewed the account of the horizon scanning exercise

Next meeting: 10th February 2026.

Interim Chair: Professor Nick Wheelhouse

Secretariat: acaf@food.gov.uk

Website: [Advisory Committee on animal feedingstuffs | Advisory Committee on animal feedingstuffs \(food.gov.uk\)](https://www.food.gov.uk/advisory-committee-on-animal-feeding-stuffs)

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

Updated: December 2025.

Last meeting: 9th December 2025.

Topics discussed included:

At their December meeting the Committee reviewed a first draft statement on the [derivation of a health-based guidance value for boron](#), they also reviewed a [Supplementary statement on Bisphenol A \(BPA\)](#).

The Committee discussed the [draft EFSA opinion on dioxins](#) – comments will be submitted to the EFSA public consultation.

The Committee continued their work on the maternal diet:

[Echinacea in the maternal diet.](#)

Scope of the nutrition and maternal health project.

Finally, they received for information purposes: [COMEAP Statement on airborne nano- and microplastic particles and fibres](#), which used the approach of the Synthesis of Epidemiological and Toxicological Evidence (SETE) sub-group.

Next meeting: 3rd of February 2026 (Virtual).

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

Updated: December 2025.

Last meeting: November 2025.

Last meeting: November 2025

Talc (non-asbestiform), the end of the genetic paradigm of cancer, submissions on COC case for change.

Next meeting: March 2026.

Further meetings: TBC.

Chair: Professor David Harrison

Secretariat: 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: December 2025.

Last meeting: October 2025.

The end of the genetic paradigm of cancer, weight of evidence assessment for genotoxicity.

Next meeting: March 2026.

Further meetings: March, June, October 2026.

Chair: Prof Gareth Jenkins.

Secretariat: COM@phe.gov.uk

Website: committee-on-mutagenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

Updated: December 2025.

Last meeting: 13th November 2025.

Meeting focus:

Nutrition and maternal health, review of health effects of meat (reserved). NDNS by inequalities, horizon scanning.

Next meeting: 12th March 2026.

Chair: Professor Ian Young.

Secretariat: SACN@dhsc.gov.uk

Website: scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition