

Update June 2020: Recent activity of the Scientific Advisory Committees

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

Committee	Recent activity	Further Information
<p>Science Council</p>	<p>Last Meeting: 24 June 2020 (Open session)</p> <p>The Science Council met in Open Plenary Session on the 24 June and the following topics were covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair’s report of the last 6 months activity. • FSA Science Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FSA Horizon Scanning update –COVID-19. ○ COVID-19: Update and impacts. • Updates on progress of Science Council’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working Groups 4 on data usage and digital technology (draft final report) and; ○ Working Group 5 on food hypersensitivity (review of progress and changes to schedule due to COVID-19) • Discussion about development of an FSA Risk Communication Toolkit. • Discussion of engagement between Science Council members and other Scientific Advisory Committees over the last six months. <p>Next meeting: Open Plenary session on 3 December 2020.</p>	<p>Chair: Professor Sandy Thomas</p> <p>Secretariat: sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://science-council.food.gov.uk/</p>

<p>Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 16th June 2020 (Open Session)</p> <p>ACSS Update (August 2020)</p> <p>Formally established in April 2018, the Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS) provides expert strategic advice to the FSA on the use of the social sciences. The Committee met for the fifth time on 16th June 2020 to give updated on activities since the last Committee meeting (December 2019). Updates were given from each working group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Assurance Working Group Paul Turner from the Science Council attended the February 2020 workshop to ensure strong links between complimentary work being undertaken at both SACs. New processes of evaluation and impact capture were developed by the group and introduced to the social science team. • The EU Exit Working Group has been ended as part of completing several of the original questions posed. • The Risk Communications Group the communicating risk report was published and can be found here: https://www.food.gov.uk/research/research-projects/communicating-risk. This drew on multiple research methods to inform development of a practical toolkit for communications personnel. The next steps will involve implementing the tools created. 	<p>Chair: Professor Susan Michie</p> <p>Secretariat: acss@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://acss.food.gov.uk/</p>

	<p>Minutes and papers from the 5th ACSS meeting are published here: https://acss.food.gov.uk/5thACSSPlenary</p> <p>Related to the EU Exit working group ending, there will be an additional meeting of the ACSS to discuss the proposals of three topics for potential new working groups in October.</p> <p>The next open meeting of the ACSS is proposed for 4th December 2020.</p>	
<p>Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 23rd of June 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GM Guidance: The Committee reviewed some of the EFSA GM guidance and commented on how they would like to assess these products in the future. • ACNFP Code of Practice: The Committee again discussed changed they would like to see in the code of practice to ensure it reflects the Committee's working ways • GM Statement: The Committee reviewed a risk assessment statement on advances in GM technologies • Novel Food Guidance: The Committee discussed the EU guidance on Novel Foods to consider implications for full Novel Food Risk assessments. 	<p>Chair: Dr Camilla Alexander-White</p> <p>Secretariat: acnfp@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://acnfp.food.gov.uk/</p>

	<p>Next meeting: 10th September 2020</p> <p>At their next meeting, which will be online, the Committee are considering CBD applications as a training exercise and the COT CBD position statement.</p>	
<p>Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)</p>	<p>Last meeting was on 30 January 2020. Issues they considered include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ACMSF Terms of Reference (The Committee discussed their terms of reference). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1321-terms-of-reference.pdf 2. Ad Hoc Group on non-proteolytic <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> and vacuum and modified atmosphere packaged foods (The group presented their report to the full Committee for discussion and approval). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acmsf-vpmap-subgroup-report_1.pdf 3. Tickborne Encephalitis virus risks to public health (The Committee considered the FSA's risk assessment). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1323-tbev.pdf 4. Food and You Survey: Wave 5 Findings (The Committee received a presentation from the FSA). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1324-food-and-you.pdf 	<p>Chair: Professor Bill Keevil</p> <p>Secretariat: acmsf@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/</p>

	<p>5. Areas Research Interest (The Committee agreed to comment on FSA's proposed areas of research interest). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1325-areas-of-research-interest.pdf</p> <p>6. Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (Committee were briefed on the activities of EFIG). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1326-update-on-efig.pdf</p> <p>7. Proposed Horizon Scanning Workshop (The Committee were briefed on a horizon scanning workshop planned for Spring 2020). https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1327-horizon-scanning_0.pdf</p> <p>8. Update on estimates of norovirus burden. The Committee was updated on the findings of an FSA funded study on the estimation of norovirus burden attributed to the food chain. https://www.food.gov.uk/news-alerts/news/fsa-research-suggests-new-higher-estimates-for-the-role-of-food-in-uk-illness</p> <p>9. Information papers circulated to members include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ACMSF's report on multidimensional representation of risks https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1334-acmsf-risk-representation-report.pdf• EFSA Scientific Opinion: Whole genome sequencing and metagenomics for outbreak investigation, source	
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attribution and risk assessment of food-borne microorganisms

<https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1336-efsa-opinion-wgs.pdf>

- EUROBAROMETER report for the UK 2019
<https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1335-eurobarometer-report-uk.pdf>

ACMSF subgroup activities January to June 2020

10. The Committee's subgroup on incidents reviewed the FSA's risk assessments published on 12 June 2020.

- Risk assessment: coronavirus risk to UK consumers via shellfish and crops grown on land treated with sewage sludge

<https://www.food.gov.uk/document/risk-assessment-coronavirus-risk-to-uk-consumers-via-shellfish-and-crops-grown-on-land-treated-with-sewage-sludge>

- Qualitative Risk Assessment: What is the risk of food or food contact materials and surfaces being a source or transmission route of SARS-CoV-2 for UK consumers?

<https://www.food.gov.uk/research/research-projects/qualitative-risk-assessment-on-the-risk-of-food-or-food-contact-materials-as-a-transmission-route-for-sars-cov-2>

11. Antimicrobial Resistance Working Group in May/June 2020 reviewed the FSA's survey of EU Harmonised Surveillance of AMR in bacteria from Retail Meats (Year 5 – Beef and Pork, 2019).

	<p>ACMSF Horizon Scanning Workshop</p> <p>12. The Committee had a virtual horizon scanning workshop on 15 June 2020. This was used to identify emerging microbiological food safety risks.</p> <p>The next ACMSF meeting will be held on 22 October 2020.</p>	
<p>Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 27th June 2019</p> <p>Next meeting: No dates set for 2020 meetings – Committee under review</p>	<p>Chair: -</p> <p>Secretariat: acaf@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://acaf.food.gov.uk/</p>
<p>Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 7th July 2020</p> <p>The COT discussed topical CBD, alternatives to plastic packaging, the human microbiome, e-cigarettes, the COT Terms of Reference and Code of Practice, potatoes and acrylamide.</p> <p>Next meeting: 15th September 2020</p>	<p>Chair: Professor Alan Boobis</p> <p>Secretariat: cot@food.gov.uk</p> <p>Website:</p>

		https://cot.food.gov.uk/
Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)	<p>Last meeting – 16th July 2020 The COC reviewed guidance statement overview and specific guidance statements, discussed the draft position paper on “The tumour microenvironment” and followed up on horizon scanning.</p> <p>Next meeting: 24th November 2020</p>	<p>Chair: Professor David Harrison</p> <p>Secretariat: COC@phe.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/committee-on-carcinogenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment-coc</p>

<p>The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 9 June 2020</p> <p>The agenda included a presentation on mutational spectra by Prof David Phillips, review of guidance statements and the guidance statement series update, COM response to the EFSA public consultation on the draft guidance on aneugenicity assessment and work on the report and paper from the workshop on interpretation of genotoxicity data held last year.</p> <p>Next meeting: 25 November 2020</p>	<p>Chair: Dr David Lovell</p> <p>Secretariat: COM@phe.gov.uk</p> <p>Website: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/committee-on-mutagenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment</p>
<p>Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)</p>	<p>Last meeting: 11 June 2020</p> <p>Agenda items include: Nutrition and older adults living in the community, Lower carbohydrate diets for adults with type 2 diabetes and Nutrition and Covid-19 related work.</p>	<p>Chair: Professor Ian Young</p> <p>Secretariat: SACN@phe.gov.uk</p>

	Next meeting: 20 November	Website: https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition
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