

**Update September 2020:** Recent activity of the Scientific Advisory Committees

**TOX/2020/66**

**COMMITTEE ON TOXICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT**

**UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**Purpose**

This paper outlines issues from other advisory committees that may be of interest to COT.

**Secretariat  
November 2020**

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.

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Recent activity</b>	<b>Further Information</b>
<b>Science Council</b>	<p><b>Last Meeting:</b> 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"> <li>• The Chair’s report of the last 6 months activity.</li> <li>• FSA Science Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FSA Horizon Scanning update –COVID-19.</li> <li>○ COVID-19: Update and impacts.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Updates on progress of Science Council’s: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Working Groups 4 on data usage and digital technology (draft final report) and;</li> <li>○ Working Group 5 on food hypersensitivity (review of progress and changes to schedule due to COVID-19)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Discussion about development of an FSA Risk Communication Toolkit.</li> <li>• Discussion of engagement between Science Council members and other Scientific Advisory Committees over the last six months.</li> </ul> <p><b>Update:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The final report for Working Group 4 was presented to the FSA Board at their 26 August meeting.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Professor Sandy Thomas</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> <a href="mailto:sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk">sciencecouncil@food.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://science-council.food.gov.uk/">https://science-council.food.gov.uk/</a></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An intermediate report for Working Group 5 was presented to the FSA Board at their 16 September meeting.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next meeting:</b> Open Plenary session on 3 December 2020. Expected to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress on Working Group 5</li> <li>• New review on quality of third-party evidence</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)</b></p>	<p><b>Updated: 11/11/2020 (PL)</b>  <b>Last meeting:</b> 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 – Closed session</p> <p><b>ACSS Update (October 2020)</b></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 on 15<sup>th</sup> October for a discussion on future working groups topics as Risk Communications has made solid progress to completing its aims, leaving the Assurance Working Group as the main active group.</p> <p>The two new topics agreed by the ACSS will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kitchen behaviours examining food hygiene practices in a domestic and catering settings. This project is out for tender and will have immediately start having input from the ACSS.</li> <li>• Climate change to start mid 2021. The ACSS will seek to build on findings from the climate change report from the Government due in the middle of 2021. This working group is still in the scoping</li> </ul>	<p><b>Chair:</b>  Professor  Susan Michie</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b>  acss@food.gov.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b>  <a href="https://acss.food.gov.uk/">https://acss.food.gov.uk/</a></p>

	<p>phase and will seek to better understand the effect of climate change on the food system from a social science perspective.</p> <p><b>Becky to complete Assurance update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Assurance Working Group</b> 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.</li> <li>• <b>The Risk Communications Group</b> the communicating risk report was published and can be found here: <a href="https://www.food.gov.uk/research/research-projects/communicating-risk">https://www.food.gov.uk/research/research-projects/communicating-risk</a>. 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.</li> </ul> <p>Minutes and papers from the 5<sup>th</sup> ACSS meeting are published here: <a href="https://acss.food.gov.uk/5thACSSPlenary">https://acss.food.gov.uk/5thACSSPlenary</a></p> <p>The next open meeting of the ACSS is on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.</p>	
<p><b>Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)</b></p>	<p><b>Last meeting:</b> 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Dr Camilla</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>COT CBD Position</b> – The Committee discussed the COT's/FSA position on the data limitations and information surrounding CBD.</li> <li>• <b>CBD Applications</b> (Reserved business)- The Committee were asked to compare and contrast two CBD dossiers as a training exercise.</li> <li>• <b>Request for Advice for CBD Applicants</b> – The Committee considered a request for advice to CBD applicants regarding the specifications in the event of a joint application</li> <li>• <b>ACNFP Code of Practice:</b> The Committee discussed final changes to the Code of Practice.</li> </ul> <p><b>Next meeting: 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b></p> <p>At their next meeting, which will be online, the Committee are considering two GE literature reviews and a report on the risk profile of edible Insects.</p>	<p>Alexander-White</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> <a href="mailto:acnfp@food.gov.uk">acnfp@food.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://acnfp.food.gov.uk/">https://acnfp.food.gov.uk/</a></p>
<p><b>Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)</b></p>	<p>Last meeting was on 30 January 2020. Issues they considered include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ACMSF Terms of Reference (The Committee discussed their terms of reference). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1321-terms-of-reference.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1321-terms-of-reference.pdf</a></li> </ol>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Professor Bill Keevil</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> <a href="mailto:acmsf@food.gov.uk">acmsf@food.gov.uk</a></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>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). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acmsf-vpmap-subgroup-report_1.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acmsf-vpmap-subgroup-report_1.pdf</a></li><li>3. Tickborne Encephalitis virus risks to public health (The Committee considered the FSA's risk assessment). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1323-tbev.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1323-tbev.pdf</a></li><li>4. Food and You Survey: Wave 5 Findings (The Committee received a presentation from the FSA). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1324-food-and-you.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1324-food-and-you.pdf</a></li><li>5. Areas Research Interest (The Committee agreed to comment on FSA's proposed areas of research interest). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1325-areas-of-research-interest.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1325-areas-of-research-interest.pdf</a></li><li>6. Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (Committee were briefed on the activities of EFIG). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1326-update-on-efig.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1326-update-on-efig.pdf</a></li><li>7. Proposed Horizon Scanning Workshop (The Committee were briefed on a horizon scanning workshop planned for Spring 2020). <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1327-horizon-scanning_0.pdf">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/acm-1327-horizon-scanning_0.pdf</a></li></ol>	<p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/">https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/</a></p>
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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>

9. Information papers circulated to members include:

- 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 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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Risk assessment: coronavirus risk to UK consumers via shellfish and crops grown on land treated with sewage sludge <a href="https://www.food.gov.uk/document/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</a></li><li>• 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? <a href="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">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</a></li></ul> <p>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> <p><b>ACMSF Horizon Scanning Workshop</b></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>Last meeting was on 22 October 2020. Issues they considered include:</p>	
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1. Horizon Scanning Workshop Output (The Committee considered the draft final version of the output from the June horizon scanning workshop). Final version to be published later.
2. Review of the ACMSF report on vacuum packaging and associated processes (The Committee discussed the subgroup on non-proteolytic *C. botulinum* and vacuum and modified atmosphere packaged foods recommendation for the above report published in 1992 to be reviewed and to identify priority areas of work for consideration). [Link](#)
3. Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (Members were updated on the outcome of the group's meeting held on 6 October 2020). [Link](#)
4. STEC Research in Scotland (The Committee received a presentation from Food Standards Scotland on STEC research in Scotland). [Link](#)
5. Committee Update (The Committee received updates from the following subgroups: Ad Hoc Group on incidents, Working Group on AMR, Surveillance Working group, Ad Hoc Group on QACs and Biocides used in food processing).

**Information papers circulated to Members include:**

6. TBEV: draft risk assessment in relation to food. [Link](#)
7. Annual update on the FSA's Antimicrobial resistance programme. [Link](#)

	<p>8. ACMSF Work plan. <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>9. Items of interest from the literature. <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>10. Risk assessment: coronavirus risk to UK consumers via shellfish and crops grown on land treated with sewage sludge. <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>11. Risk Assessment: risk of food or food contact materials and surfaces being a source or transmission route of SARS-CoV-2 for UK consumers? <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>12. FAO guide to ranking food safety risks at national level. <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p>Next meeting: <b>28</b> January 2021</p>	
<p><b>Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs (ACAF)</b></p>	<p><b>Last meeting:</b> 27<sup>th</sup> June 2019</p> <p><b>Next meeting:</b> No dates set for 2020 meetings – Committee under review</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> -</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b>  <a href="mailto:acaf@food.gov.uk">acaf@food.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b></p>

		<a href="https://acaf.food.gov.uk/">https://acaf.food.gov.uk/</a>
<b>Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)</b>	<p><b>Last meeting:</b> 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020</p> <p>The COT discussed the maternal diet, chitin and chitosan based food contact materials, dioxins, cumulative mycotoxin exposure, microplastics and plant-based drinks. the COT Terms of Reference and Code of Practice.</p> <p><b>Next meeting:</b> 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Professor Alan Boobis</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> cot@food.gov.uk</p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://cot.food.gov.uk/">https://cot.food.gov.uk/</a></p>
<b>Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)</b>	<p><b>Last meeting –</b> 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020</p> <p>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><b>Next meeting:</b> 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Professor David Harrison</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> <a href="mailto:COC@phe.gov.uk">COC@phe.gov.uk</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/committee-on-">https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/committee-on-</a></p>

		<u>carcinogenicity</u> <u>-of-chemicals-</u> <u>in-food-</u> <u>consumer-</u> <u>products-and-</u> <u>the-</u> <u>environment-</u> <u>coc</u>
<b>The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)</b>	<p><b>Last meeting:</b> 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><b>Next meeting:</b> 25 November 2020</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Dr David Lovell</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b>  <u>COM@phe.go</u>  <u>v.uk</u></p> <p><b>Website:</b>  <u>https://www.go</u>  <u>v.uk/governme</u>  <u>nt/organisa</u>  <u>s/committee-</u>  <u>on-</u>  <u>mutagenicity-</u>  <u>of-chemicals-</u>  <u>in-food-</u>  <u>consumer-</u>  <u>products-and-</u></p>

		<u>the- environment</u>
<b>Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)</b>	<p><b>Last meeting:</b> 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><b>Next meeting:</b> 20 November</p>	<p><b>Chair:</b> Professor Ian Young</p> <p><b>Secretariat:</b> <u>SACN@phe.gov.uk</u></p> <p><b>Website:</b> <u><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition">https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition</a></u></p>