

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

### **Update on actions taken subsequent to COT advice – Paper for information – for information.**

#### **Background**

1. During 2021, COT statements and lay summaries have been published on, combined exposure to mycotoxins, variable life time exposure, plant based drinks and microplastics- an overarching statement and a specific statement covering the oral route. Position papers were published on dioxins and alternatives to plastic packaging. The ENNDS statement and the position paper on cannabidiol (CBD) were updated to reflect new information.
2. COT opinions are frequently cited by the relevant Government Departments and Agencies in dealing with correspondence.
3. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) routinely uses the Committee's conclusions and opinions in risk assessments following food safety incidents, responding to queries from consumers and in assessing emerging risks. For instance, in 2021, previous COT advice has been used in relation to histamine in cheese
4. This paper contains brief information on other actions taken subsequent to completion of recent COT discussions. This should be read in conjunction with the draft text of the Annual Report (paper TOX/2022/06), which provides the background.

#### **COT Evaluations**

## **Combined exposure to mycotoxins**

5. The statement was published earlier in 2021 ([COT Statement 2021/04](#)), while the aim of the work was to review the possibilities of a combined assessment for mycotoxins, it has been referred to as part of the risk assessment of cow's milk.

## **Plant based drinks**

6. The COT statement is feeding into the work of the joint COT -Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) Working Group (WG) on plant based drinks. This WG will consider the toxicological and nutritional aspects of plant based drinks to provide joined up consumer advice.

## **Cannabidiol (CBD)**

7. The CBD position paper was updated to include additional information on dermal and inhalational exposure.

8. Numerous applications for the Novel Foods authorisation of CBD products have been received by the agency. The advice given by COT has been used by the FSA and the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP) to inform the approach being developed to assessing CBD products.

## **Microplastics**

8. The COT review of microplastics was presented at a recent International Life Sciences Institute ILSI webinar, with very complimentary feedback being received. A summary of the proceedings is available on the [ILSI website](#).

## **Infant feeding**

9. All chemicals identified for the review of risk of toxicity in the diets of infants (aged 0-12 months) and young children (age 1-5 years), commissioned by Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN), have been assessed. Conclusions have

been published either as separate statements, or as part of the Overarching Statement (COT, 2019) and Addendum to the Overarching Statement (COT, 2020).

10. The COT review of the infant diet was presented in a poster at Eurotox in September 2020 and at the BTS Annual Congress in April 2021.

11. Once SACN has published their report, it is anticipated that the reviews will inform Government recommendations on complementary and young child feeding.

### **Dioxins**

12. Following the discussion of the EFSA opinion on dioxins and the COT's recommendations to undertake their own review, a business case has been prepared for the proposed literature review (of all relevant endpoints) and we are hopeful that funding has been secured so the work can start in the next financial year.

### **Titanium dioxide**

13. After the discussions at COT and COM, it was agreed that the genotoxicity of titanium should be reviewed following the publication of the recent EFSA opinion. This is currently being planned and work will be starting shortly. The FSA has been in discussion with other regulatory agencies and the position paper has helped to support this.

### **Turmeric**

14. The COT discussion on turmeric was presented in a poster at the BTS Annual Congress in April 2021. An analytical survey of turmeric products was commissioned by the FSA and the results of that will be presented to the Committee in the near future

### **Synthesising Epidemiological and Toxicological Evidence Working Group (SETE)**

15. The final report and guidance of the SETE Working Group on the current practise of the Committees to integrate different evidence streams was published in

November 2021. The documents are hoped to provide applicable guidance and to improve both scientific consistency and to ensure public transparency.

16. The work was presented as a poster at Eurotox in September 2021.

### **NAMs Road map**

17. The draft version of the COT / FSA UK New Approach Methodologies Roadmap has been referenced and included in various scientific conferences and workshops. Furthermore, the roadmap is forming part of the work of the recruited computational fellow and the PhD student at the FSA working on predictive toxicological methods using *in silico* tools.

### **EFSA and other public consultations**

18. The COT have submitted comments to EFSA on:

- a. Non monotonic dose responses
- b. Titanium dioxide
- c. Phthalates

The final [Opinion on NMDR](#) was published in October 2021.

19. The COT also provided comments on the public consultation on the updated Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees (CopSAC). The revised Code of Practice was published in December [CopSAC 2021](#)

### **Secretariat**

**January 2022**