

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

PAPER FOR INFORMATION

Update on actions taken subsequent to COT advice

1. COT statements have been published and, where appropriate, forwarded to the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to inform its evaluations. COT opinions are frequently cited by the relevant Government Departments and Agencies in dealing with correspondence.
2. 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 2014, previous COT advice has been used in relation to aluminium, arsenic, cadmium, caffeine, cyanide in bitter apricot kernels, disinfection by-products, iodine, lead, methylmercury, phthalates, potassium and the "Southampton food colours".
3. 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/2015/07), which provides the background.

Domoic Acid in King Scallops (*Pecten Maximus*)

4. A COT statement and lay summary on the evidence that was available to support shucking as a scientifically robust and effective method of managing the health risks associated with Amnesic Shellfish Poison toxins (domoic acid (DA)) in scallops was published in December 2014.
5. The statement will be used by the FSA to inform an appraisal of risk management strategies aimed at ensuring that the risks of DA are controlled in UK produced scallops. It is anticipated that the European Union Working Group on live bivalve molluscs to discuss controls for scallops placed on the market live (in-shell) and those which are shucked to remove the inedible parts before reaching the consumer following issues raised by Food and Veterinary Office audits and requests for clarification from Member States (MS). The FSA expects to share the statement with the Commission and other MS to inform those discussions.

EFSA public consultation on a draft scientific opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of bisphenol A (BPA) in foodstuffs

6. The COT comments were submitted to EFSA and presented at an EFSA stakeholder meeting. The final EFSA opinion was published on 21 January 2015¹.

EFSA public consultation on a draft scientific opinion on acrylamide in food

7. The COT comments were submitted to EFSA and presented at an EFSA stakeholder meeting. The final EFSA opinion is due to be published in mid 2015.

COT review of risks arising from the infant diet and the development of atopic and autoimmune disease

8. The COT has been asked by the Subgroup on Maternal and Child Nutrition (SMCN) of the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) to provide advice on risks arising from the diet that are related to the development of food allergy and toxicity of chemicals in food, in support of a review SMCN are undertaking of UK Government recommendations on complementary and young child feeding. The recommendations cover diet from birth to age five years and are being considered in two stages.

9. The first stage has focussed on infants aged 0-12 months and is nearly completed. A number of chemicals have been reviewed in order to evaluate their potential risks to infants following a strategy that was agreed in November 2012 for review of evidence of dietary exposures in infants and subsequent risk of developing food allergy, and atopic and auto-immune disease. Statements published so far include:

- Overarching statement on risks of chemical toxicity and allergic disease in relation to infant diet
Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2012/650147>
- Statement on the potential risks from high levels of vitamin A in the infant diet.
Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2013/cotstavita>
- Statement on the potential risks from aluminium in the infant diet. Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2013/aluminium>
- Statement on the potential risks from lead in the infant diet. Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2013/lead>
- Statement on the potential risks from high levels of soya phytoestrogens in the infant diet. Available at:

¹ <http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/3978.htm>

<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2013/cotstatphytos>

- Statement on endosulfan isomers, pentachlorobenzene and chlordecone in relation to infant diet. Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/statonpops>
- Statement on the potential risks from perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) in the infant diet. Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2014/cotstatonpfos>
- Statement on the potential risks from α -, β - and γ -hexachlorocyclohexanes in the infant diet. Available at:
<http://cot.food.gov.uk/cotstatements/cotstatementsyrs/cotstatements2014/cotstatmonhchs>

A number of brominated flame retardants are still under discussion: hexabromocyclododecanes (HBCDDs), polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs)

10. The second stage will focus on 1-5 year old children and will commence this year. The SMCN Members envisage publishing both reviews together as one document. The COT has asked the SMCN Members for their views and opinion on how the second stage of the review should be conducted. In particular, how the SMCN Members are proposing to integrate the reviews on infants with 1-5 year old children, whether the SMCN focus has altered and some additional foods have been identified as those of concern especially with regards to older children.

11. The draft review initially was planned to go out for public consultation in 2015. The current view is for the publication to be delayed until the findings of simultaneously run EAT and LEAP studies (investigating development of atopic and autoimmune disease) become available and all of the evidence considered (including the second stage of the COT reviews on young child feeding) can be included. It is perceived that it might take place after 2015 but no official dates have been set.