

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

Paper for Information:

FSA Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) update – September 2011 meeting

This paper provides Members with an update on the work of the Food Standards Agency's Scientific Advisory Committees (SAC) and other items of general interest.

Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)

<http://acaf.food.gov.uk/>

The next meeting of ACAF will be held in the FSA Scotland offices in Aberdeen on 28 September 2011.

Items for discussion

Medicated feed issues;
Animal By-products;
Biofuels; and
Salmonella.

Interviews for three vacancies on the Committee (toxicologist, animal nutritionist and feed manufacturer) took place on 3 June 2011. Jeff Rooker, Chair of the Food Standards Agency, has announced the appointment of Angela Booth, David Peers and Christine McAlinden as members of the Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF). Ms Booth's term of office will run from 1 September 2011 until 31 August 2014. The terms of office of Dr Peers and Mrs McAlinden will run from 1 December 2011 until 30 November 2014.

Background information on the new appointees can found at:

<http://www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/board/acafmembios0811.pdf>

14th December 2011 - Provisional agenda items

Flame retardants;
Feed safety – potential gaps;
Forward work programme; and
Codex Task Force on Animal Feed.

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

<http://acmsf.food.gov.uk/>

The Committee's last meeting was held on 27 June 2011. Four new Members attended: Dr Roy Betts (food microbiology), Dr Bob Adak (epidemiology and public health), Ms Jenny Hopwood (food retailing), and Prof Jim Gray (virology). Ms Geraldine Hoad (FSA) presented a paper on **risks to consumers associated with *M. bovis* and unpasteurised milk and milk products**. Dr Michael Rowe and

Dr Richard Forgrave from Queen's University Belfast also presented their research on the survival of *M. bovis* in unpasteurised milk cheeses. The Committee was asked to give a view on the potential for unpasteurised milk and milk products contaminated with *M. bovis* to enter the food chain and the risk to human health associated with these products. The Committee did not consider the data sufficient to draw a robust conclusion. A small group of Members were asked to consider a revised risk assessment with additional data and report back to the next meeting on 22 September.

Members discussed the report of the Quinquennial Review of the ACMSF and commented on a response to the recommendations drafted by the Secretariat.

Members received a presentation from Miss Robyn Ackerman (FSA) on the findings of the Agency's **Food and You survey**.

Dr Paul Cook (FSA) provided an overview of the May 2011 meeting of the **Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group**. Dr Cook also updated the Committee on the ongoing ***E.coli* outbreaks** in Germany and France.

Subgroups

The ***Ad Hoc* Group on Foodborne Viral Infections** is focussing its work on norovirus and Hepatitis E. Summaries of meetings held so far can be found on the subgroups page of the ACMSF website at <http://acmsf.food.gov.uk/acmsfsubgroups/foodborneviralinf/>. The next meeting of the Group is to be held on 14 September.

The ***Ad Hoc* Group on Vulnerable Groups** has completed its draft report: a risk profile in relation to toxoplasma in the food chain. The draft report will be considered by the full Committee at its September meeting.

Next meeting: 22 September meeting

As well as the items mentioned above, the Committee will receive a presentation of the findings of the **Second Study on Infectious Intestinal Disease** in the community (IID2) and will be briefed on the **Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)** report on use of digestates in UK agriculture.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

<http://www.acnfp.gov.uk/>

The meeting due to be held on 7 July 2011 was cancelled.

Items which were to be discussed at that meeting are expected to be taken forward to the next meeting scheduled for 21 September 2011.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

<http://ssrc.food.gov.uk>

The eighth SSRC meeting will be held on 4 November 2011 agenda items have yet to be agreed.

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

<http://www.iacoc.org.uk/meetings/index.htm>

At its meeting on 21st July the COC discussed the following:

- A strategy for reviewing the relative vulnerability of children to asbestos in response to a request from the Department for Education for advice. Detailed discussion papers will be considered at following meetings.
- The latest draft of the COC's new overarching Guidance statement. This is part of the current review of the COC guidance on the risk assessment of chemical carcinogens.
- An update review of the latest studies on cancer incidence near municipal solid waste incinerators.
- An item for information, i.e. a recent publication estimating the alcohol attributable burden of incidence of cancer in eight European countries based on results from prospective study of the EPIC cohort.

Item for Information:

- Alcohol attributable burden of incidence of cancer in eight European countries based on results from prospective cohort study. (Schutze et al)

The next meeting date has change from 17 to 24th November

The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

<http://www.iacom.org.uk/meetings/index.htm>

At its meeting on 16th June, the COM discussed:

- post consultation amendments to its document 'COM Guidance on a strategy for testing chemicals for genotoxicity'. Following some amendments, it is anticipated that the guidance document will be published on the committee's website during the first week of September.
- A paper was considered which gave further information on the use of QSARS (Quantitative Structure Activity Relationships) by the Secretariat.
- In closed session, there was an evaluation of additional genotoxicity data on Fumagillin Dicyclohexylamine, which is an antibiotic authorised for use with honey bees for the prevention of infections caused by the *Nosema apis* parasite present in the gut of infected bees. Fumagillin DCHA is fed to the colony in winter over a period of several weeks in a medicated syrup as a supplementary food source to eradicate the parasites. This evaluation was undertaken in order to provide a response to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate who asked the COM to give an opinion on the available genotoxicity data of the product.

The next meeting will be on 20 October 2011.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

<http://gacs.food.gov.uk/gacsmeets/>

GACS published its Annual Report for 2010-11 on 12 July, coinciding with the annual report in person by the GACS Chair to the FSA Board at the open Board meeting on 12 July.

- The GACS report is available at: <http://gacs.food.gov.uk/gacsreports/>
- Board meeting papers, agendas and audio/video recordings of discussions are available at: <http://www.food.gov.uk/aboutus/ourboard/boardmeetings/>

GACS holds its next, open meeting on 9 November 2011. The agenda is being finalised but discussions are expected to include:

- Report from the FSA Chief Scientist
- Science in the SACS (including a presentation from the ACMSF Chair, Professor Sarah O'Brien, on the work of the ACMSF)
- Responses to the reviews of the COT and the ACMSF
- Report from the Working Group on Strategic Evidence
- Responses to the consultation on the GACS framework for sharing data and funding with industry and NGO partners
- Update on science governance

Secretariat
August 2011