

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

Paper for Information:

FSA Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) update – November 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 Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF) last met on 28 September 2011 in Aberdeen.

The main items discussed at the meeting are set out below:

- The Committee received an update from a Veterinary Medicines Directorate official on developments regarding medicated feed. The Committee was informed that, following a review of EU Directive 90/167 on the preparation, supply and use of medicated feedingstuffs, the European Commission is expected to propose new legislation in 2012. As part of the review, the European Commission carried out a study to evaluate the production and use of medicated feed in the EU; the results were published in 2010. The Commission has also undertaken a consultation of interested parties. The Committee noted developments with respect to the review of medicated feed legislation. It also confirmed it would be willing to provide any advice as required during the future negotiations.
- Members also received an update on the EU Animal By-products (ABP) Regulation 1069/2009/EC and related feed issues. Members were told that the new ABP Regulation and detailed implementing rules (Regulation 142/2011) came into effect in March 2011. A consultation on domestic legislation took place in the summer of 2010. Responses to the consultation indicated that, where safe to do so, opportunities to maximise feeding ABPs should be used. The Committee was informed that under ABP rules catering waste was still ineligible to be fed to animals. However, certain 'former foodstuffs' (food no longer intended for human consumption originating from food manufacturers and retailers) can be fed to livestock. The Committee was also advised that in May 2011, the Food and Environment Research Agency began a project on food and catering waste that will report in 2012. The Committee said it was keen to be kept abreast of future developments in this area.
- The Committee also considered a revision of its position paper on biofuels. It agreed to the publication of a revised paper subject to some further comments.
- Finally, the Committee received an update on controls to prevent salmonella contamination of animal feeds. It agreed to re-endorse the current line taken by UK officials in negotiations where a Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point

(HACCP)-type approach, as considered by the European Food Safety Authority and as set out in the UK Code of Practice, would be preferable to amendment of the Feed Hygiene Regulation.

The next meeting of ACAF will take place on 14 December 2011 in Aviation House. The provisional agenda for this meeting include the following items:

- Flame retardants
- Feed safety – potential gaps
- Forward Work Programme

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

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

The ACMSF met on 22 September 2011. The following items were discussed.

- The Committee received a presentation by Professor Sarah O'Brien and Dr Clarence Tam on the findings of the **Second Infectious Intestinal Disease study (IID2)**. The study showed that IID rates in the community had increased since the mid-90's but that presentation to GPs with IID had decreased. The possible reasons for this were discussed. The microorganisms most often associated with illness were Norovirus and *Campylobacter*.
- The Committee received the final report of the *Ad Hoc* Group on Vulnerable Groups on **toxoplasma in the food chain** and agreed that, following some minor amendments, the report should be the subject of a public consultation before being published.
- **Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP): Quality, safety and use of digestate in UK agriculture.** Dr David Tompkins (WRAP) gave a presentation of this work and sought the ACMSF's views on the microbiological food safety aspects of the report. Following discussion it was agreed that as this was a substantial report, a small group of ACMSF members would be convened to look at it in more detail and address the questions posed by WRAP.
- **Mycobacterium bovis and the possible health risks associated with unpasteurised milk and milk products.** Further work had been done on this risk assessment since the last meeting in June. Members agreed the conclusions of the risk assessment which were that the risk of human TB infection acquired from unpasteurised milk and milk products has changed with the increase in *M. bovis* in cattle; the risk to human health from *M. bovis* in unpasteurised cows' milk and milk products is very low; and the risk to human health from *M. bovis* in unpasteurised sheep, goat and buffalo milk and milk products is likely to be very low, but due to a lack of data on these species there are more uncertainties associated with this assessment. These conclusions would go forward for consideration by the FSA Board.

- The Committee received a paper prepared by the Secretariat on the **role and responsibilities of ACMSF Assessors, Members and the Secretariat**, following a recommendation in the quinquennial review of the Committee. There was a suggestion that consideration should be given to the addition of an assessor from the Department of Health (DH) as there were overlapping DH policy interests and responsibilities on many items discussed at ACMSF.
- An update on the work of the **Ad Hoc Group on Foodborne Viral Infections** was given. At their meeting in September the Group focussed on Environmental Health Officers' perspectives on dealing with incidents and outbreaks of norovirus, the HPU response to norovirus outbreaks, environmental monitoring and detection methods for norovirus.

The next meeting of ACMSF will be on 19 January 2012.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)
<http://www.acnfp.gov.uk/>

The next meeting of the ACNFP will be on 24 November. It will comprise of the normal business meeting in the morning followed by the Committee's annual Open Event in the afternoon.

The agendas for both meetings are currently being finalised. The Open meeting will be advertised on the ACNFP website and COT members would be welcome if they wish to attend.

An independent review of the ACNFP is due to start on 1 November and is expected to last approximately two months.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)
<http://ssrc.food.gov.uk>

The eighth SSRC meeting will be held on 4 November 2011 agenda items will include

- Discussion of forward work plan
- Horizon scanning
- Uncertainty in Risk Assessment
- Methodological advice
- Advisory Group updates

The Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)
<http://www.iacoc.org.uk/meetings/index.htm>

The next meeting date has change from 17 to 24 November. Agenda items will include:

- Relative susceptibility of children to asbestos compared to adults
- Less-than-lifetime exposures to carcinogens.
- Horizon scanning

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

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

The last meeting was held on 20 October 2011. Agenda items included:

- Draft Interim Guidance on Impurities
- Chlorophenols
- Assessment of chemicals with existing inadequate genotoxicity data
- Genotoxicity Assessment of Nanomaterials and experimental considerations
- Horizon Scanning 2011

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

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

GACS will hold its next meeting on 9 November 2011. The agenda will 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
October 2011