Meeting

Summary Of minutes of the April 2023 Meeting

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD (ACMSF) ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE WORKING GROUP

SUMMARY OF TWENTY THIRD MEETING HELD ON 18 APRIL 2023

Effect of climate change on AMR

1. Dr Kristina Osbjer, a Veterinary Advisor at the International Centre for Antimicrobial Resistance Solutions (ICARS) based in Copenhagen, gave the Group a presentation on the effects of climate change on AMR. It was noted that climate change and AMR are inter-linked issues. In areas that are experiencing higher temperatures, an increased levels of bacterial (including AMR) rates are seen. Extreme weather, such as flooding, can cause food and water borne bacteria to spread more easily causes overflow of sewage lines or agricultural runoff can release AMR bacteria into soil and water sources.

FSA's AMR Research & Evidence Programme Review

2. Kath Callaghan (FSA) provided the group with a presentation of the key outputs arising from the FSA's AMR Programme Review conference which was held on 21st and 22nd March 2023. The purpose of the event to identify and prioritise new and emerging challenges in food-related AMR and inform development of the new NAP 2025-2029.

3. The AMR Review identified surveillance of poultry meat, specifically chicken and turkey, as the top priority for continued surveillance. Fresh produce was ranked second priority, primarily due to challenges in agricultural practices and the risk of AMR spread, particularly when the product is consumed undercooked. Fish followed by beef, pork, and lamb were next in the priority order. Raw pet food was ranked as the fifth highest surveillance priority especially due to the increased popularity of raw pet food and the potential risk this product poses to human health due to handling.

4. In terms of research, the priorities centred around the need for cross-government capability and use of genomic technologies, improved sharing of datasets, and harmonisation of analysis methods that would enable collaborative analysis of sequencing datasets.

5. The independent experts who assessed the FSA's AMR Research & Evidence Programme as part of the AMR Review held in March 2023, concluded that the FSA has delivered against its NAP commitments to strengthen the evidence around AMR in the food chain. The outputs from the AMR Review's prioritisation exercise provided a collective expert opinion to inform the development of the next set of food commitments and deliverables in the new 2025-2029 NAP.

6. The members thanked Kath for her presentation and the team behind organising a successful event.

FSA Project FS430957: A critical review of AMR risks arising as a consequence of using biocides and heavy metals in food animal production.

7. The group were presented with the findings of the above study which was commissioned by the FSA to help increase our understanding of whether, and to what extent the use of biocides and heavy metals in animal production leads to the development and spread of AMR within the food chain and whether this could potentially lead to greater consumer exposure to AMR bacteria from food.

8. The group commented on the findings. The study is available on the FSA's website.

FSA Project FS307035: Antimicrobial resistance in biofilms formed during secondary food processing of meat and meat products.

9. The group received a presentation for the above study which commissioned to analyse the contribution of bacteria in biofilms in secondary meat processing facilities to the antimicrobial resistance (AMR) burden of foodstuffs.

10. The group commented on the findings. The study is available on the FSA's website.

Secretariat

September 2023