

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD
INFORMATION PAPER

Update from the Scientific Advisory Committees

Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs met on the 22 October 2014. Dr Ian Brown welcomed two new members Mr Geoffrey Brown (feed materials) and Professor Robert Smith (veterinary science) to their first meeting. The main points from the meeting were:-

Nick Major, chairman of the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) Feed Sector Sustainability Committee provided the Committee with an interesting presentation on the work of his Committee which considers issues relating to sustainable animal feed. The scope of the Committee covers feed ingredients and their sources, feed production, product use and wider cross sector issues such as environmental footprinting and the sustainable use of natural resources. ACAF Members agreed that they would revisit the issue of sustainability at a future ACAF meeting.

An official from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) outlined the European Commission's proposals on amendments to regulations to organic production and labelling of organic products, and the work Defra had done as part of the negotiations. The Committee were advised of the main changes to the existing Regulations and the concerns raised by both industry and Defra. Members of the Committee agreed to provide their comments on the proposals to Defra.

John Kelley from the Agricultural Industries Confederation (AIC) provided the Committee with a presentation on the Feed Adviser Register (FAR). This was a very informative presentation with several questions from the Committee regarding issues on experience, qualifications and working in the industry. The Committee was keen to find out how other similar schemes, such as the British Society of Animal Science, were progressing.

The Committee was provided with an oral update on the re-authorisation of feed additives. The Committee learnt that the re-authorisation process was still continuing.

Finally, officials from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate provided the Committee with details of the European Commission's proposals on medicated feed and medicinal products. The Committee was informed that the proposals had been published on 10 September 2014 with the first working groups being held on 9 and 10 October. The Committee were keen to assist in the negotiations as required.

The next meeting of ACAF will be on 2 February 2015. Provisional agenda items for the meeting include:

- presentation on sustainable palm oil and impacts on animal feed;
- Scotland;
- update on Commission proposals on medicated feedingstuffs; and
- update on Official Controls 882/2004.

Consumer Advisory Panel (CAP)

The Consumer Advisory Panel exists to provide informed consumer insights and perspectives into FSA policy making. The CAP met on 11 December 2014. The agenda included the following discussion items:

1. CAP – exploring its comparative impact in the FSA. The document ‘Involving Consumers in the Development of Regulatory Policy’ was discussed in relation to the impact and progress of the Panel.
2. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Georgina Collins from the FSA and Ron Yip from BIS presented a paper on the Trans-Atlantic Trade Partnership Agreement setting the scene asking the Panel to help identify what key consumer issues there might be and what consumers should expect from the FSA.
3. Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (FHRS) Mandation. Michael Harding presented a paper on FHRS mandation in England. Research with consumers suggests awareness of the sticker is quite high although awareness and use of the scheme is still quite low. FHRS mandation means mandatory local government participation, mandatory display of stickers and mandatory provision of the rating when asked. The scheme has extended to business trade in Wales, with consumers now having more information about how the rating is reached.

Committee on Toxicity (COT)

The COT met on 9th December 2014 and discussed the following items:

1. First draft statement on the potential risks from hexabromocyclododecanes (HBCDDs) in the infant diet.
2. a.) Potassium-based replacements for table salt and sodium additives. Additional information on hyperkalaemia.

- b.) First draft statement on potassium based replacements for sodium chloride and sodium-based additives.
3. First draft statement on polybrominated biphenyls (PBBs) in the infant diet.
 4. First draft statement on the effects of soya consumption on thyroid status.
 5. Third draft statement on the potential risks from polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in the infant diet.

The next COT meeting will be on 3rd February.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

GACS met on 29 October 2014, and discussed the items below. This was GACS first meeting attended by the FSA's new Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor Guy Poppy.

- Report on FSA Science
- FSA response to the Elliot Review
- FSA Science and Evidence Strategy
- Scientific staffing, skills and professions in the FSA
- Science in the Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs) (This included a presentation from ACMSF Chair Sarah O'Brien on the IID 2 attribution study)

The next GACS meeting will be on 31 March 2015. The agenda is still to be confirmed, but discussions are likely to include:

- Report on FSA Science
- FSA Science and Evidence Strategy
- Scientific staffing, skills and professions in the FSA
- Science in the Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs)
- FSA evidence portfolio
- Update on GACS-SSRC working group on use of evidence

Secretariat
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