

ACMSF Forward Work Plan 2016/17

Last reviewed January 2016

This work plan shows the main areas of ACMSF's work over the next 12 to 18 months. It should be noted that the Committee must maintain the flexibility to consider urgent issues that arise unpredicted and discussions scheduled in the work programme may therefore be deferred.

ACMSF Terms of reference

To assess the risk to humans of microorganisms which are used, or occur, in or on food, and to advise the Food Standards Agency on any matters relating to the microbiological safety of food.

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
1	<p>Horizon scanning</p> <p>ACMSF discussion on the outcomes of the January 2015 horizon scanning workshop where members identified current and emerging microbiological issues of concern and ranked the issues in terms of strategic priority and urgency.</p>	<p>Outcomes from workshop were considered at the June 2015 ACMSF meeting. Members have agreed to set up groups on: Genomics and <i>Campylobacter</i>. These were ranked as the priority areas that needed immediate attention. Ad Hoc Group on <i>Campylobacter</i> has been set up. A meeting for the group is planned for Spring 2016.</p>	<p>Genomics: ACMSF assessment of the effect of the genomics revolution on outbreak investigations.</p> <p><i>Campylobacter</i>: ACMSF's assessment of progress made (by the FSA) in addressing the Committee's recommendations in the ACMSF <i>Campylobacter</i> report published in 2005.</p>

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
2	<p>Eggs</p>	<p>In January 2015 the ACMSF set up an Ad Hoc Group on Eggs to establish the current level of risk to consumers including vulnerable groups from eating raw or lightly cooked shell eggs or their products to determine whether the current FSA advice remains applicable.</p> <p>The subgroup will present its draft report to the Committee in January 2016.</p>	<p>ACMSF's assessment of the risks that may be associated with consumption of shell eggs and an indication whether the risk has changed since the ACMSF's 2001 report.</p>
3	<p>Newly Emerging Pathogens</p> <p>The Newly Emerging Pathogens Working Group provides advice on the significance and risks from newly emerging or re-emerging pathogens through food chain exposure pathways.</p>	<p>Continuous.</p>	<p>The Committee to draw the FSA's attention to any risks to human health from newly emerging pathogens via food.</p>
4	<p>Microbiological Surveillance of food</p> <p>The Surveillance Working Group provides advice as required in connection with the FSA's microbiological food surveillance programme and any other surveillance relevant to foodborne disease.</p>	<p>Working group activities are continuous.</p> <p>Committee to consider the findings of the FSA's (Year 2) microbiological survey of <i>Campylobacter</i> contamination in fresh whole UK produced chilled chickens at retail sale when results are available.</p>	<p>Surveillance Working Group/Committee comments on survey protocols and survey results for consideration by FSA in their microbiological food surveillance activities.</p>

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5	<p>Developing trends in relation to foodborne disease</p> <p>The Committee receives updates on research, surveys, investigations, meetings and conferences of interest.</p>	<p>As issues arise</p> <p>EFIG¹ update will be provided at the January 2016 and 30 June 2016 meetings.</p>	<p>ACMSF provides comments on the updates it receives for the FSA's consideration.</p>
6	<p>International and EU developments on the microbiological safety of food</p> <p>The Committee is updated on issues of relevance and significant developments at an EU and international level on microbiological food safety, such as EFSA opinions and Codex Committee on Food Hygiene meetings.</p>	<p>As issues arise.</p>	<p>ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.</p>
7	<p>Microbiological Incidents and outbreaks</p> <p>The views of the Committee will be sought where necessary and updates provided on outbreaks of significance.</p>	<p>As issues arise.</p>	<p>ACMSF assessment of the risks in relation to significant microbiological outbreaks/incidents.</p>

¹ Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group

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8	<p>Antimicrobial resistance</p> <p>ACMSF published a report on microbial antibiotic resistance in relation to food safety in 1999. Progress on the Committee's recommendations was reviewed in 2005 and 2007.</p>	<p>The Committee were updated on developments and emerging issues in relation to antimicrobial resistance in January 2013 and agreed to set up a Working Group to consider antimicrobial resistance and food chain issues in more detail. The subgroup had five meetings in 2015 and four meetings are planned for 2016. Summaries of discussions and recommendations are provided at plenary meetings.</p>	<p>ACMSF assessment of the key risks to the food chain which may have consequences for human health and identification of key research or surveillance gaps in relation to the food chain.</p>
9	<p><i>Mycobacterium bovis</i> and possible health risks associated with meat</p>	<p>The Committee will be asked to review the risk level classification associated with the consumption of meat from animals with evidence of <i>M. bovis</i> infection. Committee to use the <i>M. bovis</i> and raw milk risk assessment framework. Uncertainties are to be highlighted before risk classification is considered.</p>	<p>ACMSF assessment of risk to human health in relation to the consumption of meat from animals with evidence of <i>M. bovis</i> infection.</p>
10	<p>Social science research relating to microbiological food safety risks</p>	<p>The Committee will receive updates on the findings of social science research which may have a bearing on the assessment of microbiological food safety risks.</p>	<p>ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.</p>

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
11	FSA Board's New Approach in relation to Rare Burgers	The Committee to be updated on work the FSA is undertaking following the FSA Board's decision on rare burgers.	Committee to be kept informed of progress and to contribute to the work where appropriate.
12	Food safety risk of recycled manure solids used as bedding for dairy cattle	The Committee considered the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB) Dairy (formerly DairyCo) scoping study at its meeting in January 2015. The FSA is now asking the Committee to review further research administered by AHDB Dairy.	The Committee to consider the report and provide comments on the food safety aspects to the FSA.
13	Changes to plant protection product MRLs: potential impact on food safety	Members were alerted to this at the October 2015 meeting and the FSA is now requesting that the Committee considers the associated food safety issues.	ACMSF to consider the evidence in this area with respect to impacts on food safety and to provide advice to the FSA.
14	Risk assessment outputs	Committee to revisit its approach to how it expresses risk assessment outputs.	Improved consistency and clarity in framing risk assessment outputs.