

ACM/577

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

INFORMATION PAPER

FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH

Attached is the text of a Food Standards Agency press release announcing the membership of the independent Advisory Committee on Research, set up to guide the Agency's research programme.

**Secretariat
March 2002**

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Thursday 28th February 2002

INDEPENDENT EXPERTS TO GUIDE FOOD STANDARDS AGENCY'S £30.8M RESEARCH PROGRAMME

The Food Standards Agency has today announced the names of 12 eminent scientists, academics and consumer experts who will guide its £30.8 million research programme.

The independent Advisory Committee on Research will be chaired by Michael Lean, Professor in Human Nutrition at the University of Glasgow.

Sir John Krebs, Chairman of the FSA, said, "The new Advisory Committee on Research will play an important part in ensuring that the Agency has a first class research portfolio and its research is firmly focused on providing the evidence the Agency needs to develop its policy aims and objectives – especially making the research relevant to the needs of consumers."

Sir John added that the level of experience and expertise in the Committee would be particularly useful in identifying future areas of research the Agency needs to protect public health.

The Committee's role will be to:

- Review and advise the FSA Board on the Agency's £24.8 million research and £6m survey programmes
- Help the Agency identify the best sources of research and survey expertise
- Advise on the Agency's research and science policy in relation to the EU and other collaborators
- Advise on new and emerging research areas and consider whether the Agency should fund the projects itself or encourage funding from other organisations
- Advise on how research and science should sit within the overall strategy of the Agency

The Committee will help the Agency develop its research and survey work. It will advise the Board on research priorities, looking particularly at where there may be gaps in research. It will also help the Agency to ensure it gets better value from its whole research portfolio.

A commitment to openness will mean the new committee will hold open workshops and the outcomes of meetings will be publicly announced.

Some 100 people applied to sit on the committee and all 12 members were appointed in open competition. The successful candidates are experts in the following fields: life sciences (3), physical/chemical sciences (2), social sciences (1), consumer science (including consumer attitudes to food) (1), the food industry (1) and food law enforcement (1). In addition the Committee has two lay representatives.

The committee members are:

Professor Michael Lean (Chairman), Professor in Human Nutrition, University of Glasgow.

Professor Duncan Maskell, the Marks and Spencer Professor of Farm Animal Health, Food Science and Food Safety at the University of Cambridge

Professor William Donachie, the Deputy Director of Moredun Research Institute

Professor Alastair Robertson, the Director of the Institute of Food Research

Professor Stuart Alexander Slorach, the Deputy Director-General of the Swedish National Food Administration

Professor Anne Murcott, Honorary Professor of the Sociology of Health at South Bank University

Ms Diane McCrea, a consultant on consumer affairs and food with Consumers International

Professor Christopher Ritson, Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture and Biological Sciences at the University of Newcastle

Dr Peter John McClure, the Head of Unilever's Consumer Safety Department

Professor Richard Charles Moody, Head of the Department of Food and Consumer Technology at Manchester Metropolitan University

Dr Sati Ariyanayagam, a consultant physician

Ms Tanya Anne Heasman, a consultant on health and safety issues

Note for Editors

The Advisory Committee Research is a new advisory non-departmental public body, appointed by the Agency Board. It is expected to meet up to three times a year.

The Agency's research budget in the year 2000-2001 was £27 million - £21m on research and £6m on survey work. The research was made up of the following:

Food safety – chemical safety of food	26%
Nutrition and diet	25%
Food safety – food-borne illness	23%
Food safety – TSEs	11%
Food safety – food products and processes	8%
Public information labelling and choice	5%
Consumer confidence	1%
Food law enforcement	1%

In the past year an additional £2 million has been available for research into safety assessment of GM foods.

The Food Standards Agency Scotland has a £1.8 million research programme.

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