

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

At a previous meeting of the Committee, Members received a paper (ACM/588) providing information on the work of various other advisory committees. This paper provides a brief update of the work of the following committees :-

- Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)
- Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)
- Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

**Secretariat
June 2003**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS

ACAF have met five times since May 2002 and discussed the following:

4 July 2002

- On-farm feeding practice
- Intra-species recycling
- Antibiotic growth promoters (AGPs)

24 September 2002

- On-farm feeding practice
- The Use of Tallow in Animal Feed
- UK response to prevalence of strains of Salmonella newport in USA

4 December 2002

- Codex Task Force on Animal Feeding
- On-farm Feeding Practice Review
- Feed Law Enforcement
- Aflatoxins in Wild Bird Foods
- EC proposals on Traceability and Labelling of GMOs and GM Food and Feed

11 February 2003

- On-farm Feeding Practice Review
- EC Feed Hygiene Proposal
- Annual Report 2003
- Forward Work Plan
- ACAF Open Meeting

15 April 2003

- Feed Law Enforcement Review
- On-farm Feeding Practice Review
- Report from the GM Sub-Group

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION (SACN)

SACN have met 4 times since the last update and have discussed the following :

June 02 meeting (open)

- Letter from Professor Annie Anderson on FAC Food Labelling Report.
Reply from Rosemary Hignett, Food Labelling & Standards
- Physical Activity in Routine General Practice
- Briefing on the Advisory Committee on Research (ACR)
- A Framework for Evaluation of Evidence that Relates Food and Nutrients to Health
- Advice to FSA: on the benefits of oily fish and fish oil consumption from SACN
- Salt Subgroup Update & Minutes of Meeting 18/04/02
- Working Group on Iron Update & Minutes of Meeting 8/03/02
- ACNFP opinion on DHA Gold
- The Role of Dietary Lipids in the Development of Cardiovascular Disease.
FSA Nutrition Research Programme Workshops
- Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities:
Food Standards Agency:
Antioxidants in Food workshop
Folic Acid
UK Health Departments:
Department of Health
Infant Feeding Survey
The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (NI)
The Scottish Executive Health Department
- Current Arrangements for the Assessment of the Nutritional Aspect of Novel Foods
- Annual Report
- Question and Answer session

October 02 Meeting

- MRC Autism Report
- Salt Subgroup Statement & Minutes of Meeting 21/05/02
- Update on Subgroup on Child and Maternal Nutrition
- EVM – Draft Report for Consultation
- DH Five A Day programme
- Complex Carbohydrates. Report on a review of FSA research
- Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities
Food Standards Agency Update
Department of Health
Research on Diet and Nutrition commissioned under the Department of Health's Policy Research Programme Update
The Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (NI)
The Scottish Executive Health Department

The National Assembly for Wales

- WHO/FAO report on Health and Nutritional Properties of Probiotics in Food Industry including Powder Milk with Live Lactic Acid Bacteria
- Parliamentary Questions Related to SACN

February 03 Meeting

- Salt Subgroup Summary of Responses Received to Consultation on Salt & Health Draft Report
- Iron Working Group Peter Aggett oral report
- Maternal and Infant Nutrition Subgroup Oral update Anthony Williams
- Scientific Committee Review
- Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes Opinions
Consideration of opinions: Phytosterols
- Phytoestrogens: SACN Advice to COT
- Horizon Scanning Workshop
- Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities

FSA

DH

Health Departments

- Annual Report Structure
- GM Foods: Chairs Correspondence

June 2003 (open)

- SACN Annual Report
- Salt and Health report board paper
- Iron Working Group oral report
- Expert Group on Vitamins and Minerals (EVM) report Safe upper levels for vitamins and minerals: report of the expert group on vitamins and minerals
- SACN/COT Review of Fish
- WHO report Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Disease
- Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities for information

FSA

DH

Devolved Health Departments

Health Development Agency

- Question and answer session

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES (ACNFP) - ACTIVITIES SINCE JUNE 2002

The Novel Foods Regulation (EC) 258/97 stipulates that all foods or food ingredients that do not have a significant history of consumption in the EU prior to May 1997 are subject to a full pre-market safety evaluation. This includes novel micro-organisms consumed as a food in their own right (e.g. probiotics) and foods produced from or with the aid of micro-organisms (e.g. DHA-Gold, trehalose).

ACNFP ACTIVITY OF RELEVANCE TO ACMSE

1. DHA Gold – update.

In 2001, the ACNFP received an application from OmegaTech, seeking approval to market DHA Gold™, an oil rich in the unsaturated fatty acid DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). The Committee was content that there were no nutritional or safety concerns with this product, since it was demonstrated that all components of the extracted oil are themselves present to some degree in the human food chain. However, due to the lack of confirmatory data in humans, the Committee requested that the Company carry out a human clinical trial to demonstrate that there are no adverse effects from humans consuming the oil.

The Company supplied these data in January 2002 and the Committee considered them at its meeting in February 2003. The Committee was satisfied by the evidence provided that DHA Gold™ is safe for use as a nutritional food ingredient.

2. Safety assessment of micro-organisms used in food and feed.

Having consulted the three scientific committees that advise the Commission on relevant issues (the Scientific Committees on Animal Nutrition, Food and Plants), the European Commission has published a working paper concerning a generic approach to the safety assessment of micro-organisms used in food and feed and has requested the views of interested parties. This generic approach includes the concept of a Qualified Presumption of Safety (QPS) which could be applied to groups of related micro-organisms.

The Committee considered this at its meeting in May 2003. Members were invited to comment on the assessment of micro-organisms and its applicability to the assessment of novel foods that are, or are produced by, micro-organisms. Members were informed that their views would be incorporated into the Food Standards Agency's formal response to the Commission paper.

Members discussed the aspects of this paper and agreed that it was a useful document. Members stressed the importance of basing evaluations on carefully defined taxonomic units and that the molecular methods used for identification must be of a very high standard. Members felt that more clarity was needed with regard to who was taking the responsibility for the running of the assessment scheme. Members were asked to submit any additional comments to the Secretariat within two weeks of the meeting.

FULL LIST OF ACNFP ACTIVITIES:

Full novel food applications submitted to the UK Competent Authority

- DHA Gold – update.
- Unilever – An application under the Novel Foods Regulation to extend the range of uses of phytosterol esters in food products.
- Echium oil – update.

Novel food applications submitted to other Member States

- Rapeseed oil (France).
- Maize germ oil (France).
- AR02 Multibene (Finland).
- ADM plant sterols and sterol esters (Netherlands).
- Iodine in eggs (Belgium).
- Tahitian noni Juice (*Morinda citrifolia*) – update.
- Fresh and processed food products derived from Novartis Bt 11 maize – update.
- Food and food ingredients derived from Monsanto GA21 GM maize – update.

Requests for an opinion on Substantial Equivalence

- Phytosterol/stanol – Forbes Medi-Tech.
- Monsanto – oil from GM cottonseed.

Other issues considered by the ACNFP

- Safety assessment of micro-organisms used in food and feed.
- Public Hearing on Chardon LL maize.
- T25 maize – update.
- Scientific Steering Committee guidance document on the information needed for the risk assessment of GM plant-derived food and feed.
- Research on horizontal gene transfer.
- *ACRE guidelines on best practices for molecular data presentation.*
- OECD consensus documents on sunflower and rice.
- Monsanto GM maize hybrid lines NK03 x MON810.
- Argan oil (almond kernel oil).

Other activities

- Further increasing the Committee's openness policy.
- Consumer interests in the assessment of novel foods.
- ACNFP Factsheets.
- ACNFP guidelines on human studies and taste trials.

Developments elsewhere

- FSA Review of Scientific Committees.
- Review of the Novel Food Regulation 258/97.
- Commission proposals on the Traceability, Authorisation and Labelling of GM foods.