ACM/670

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

At the June meeting of the Committee, Members received a paper (ACM/646) 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
November 2003

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS (ACAF)

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs held its twenty-first meeting in London on 23 September. The Committee discussed a number of issues, including its review of feed law enforcement, funding, checks on imports, approval and registration of establishments and intermediaries. It considered a request from the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition for assistance in review of advice to consumers on the consumption in liver of vitamin A and an update from the GM sub-group. The Committee also agreed to publish more descriptive agendas ahead of meetings so that stakeholders could be better informed about issues to be discussed.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION (SACN)

SACN have met once since the last update on 22 October. Items on the agenda included

- SACN Annual Report future structure
- Nutrition and Health claims proposal
- Iron Working Group
- Food Promotion to Children
- Sub-Group on Maternal and Child Nutrition
- Horizon Scanning workshop
- FSA Departmental Report
- COT statement on metals in infant food
- Government Update on Nutrition Related Activities
    - FSA
    - DH
    - Devolved Health Departments
    - Health Development Agency

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES (ACNFP)

The Committee met on 16 July 2003 and were asked to consider the German initial opinion on an application for authorisation under 258/97, to import grain and grain derived food ingredients from insect-resistant maize line MON863 and maize hybrid line MON863 X MON 810. Having considered the human health aspects of these lines in May under Directive 2001/18/EC and concluded that there were no concerns, members stated that they agreed with the German initial opinion that there were no safety issues with MON863. However, they did not agree that an additional safety assessment was necessary with regard to the presence of the resistance marker *nptII*. Following further discussion the Committee agreed that a precedent had to be set for assessing hybrids.

Members were also asked to consider an application for authorisation under 258/97, to incorporate whole and ground Chia seed into soft grain bread. Members discussed the potential allergenicity of this product and expressed concerns about the selection of the subjects who took part in the allergen screening. Members suggested that further studies should to be carried out on subjects with known seed allergies, especially allergies to sesame seed. Members queried the use of paraquat and requested more information on its application and on the possible risk from mycotoxins. Members also requested more information about the storage and transportation conditions.

Members also considered an application from Neways Inc. for an opinion under Article 3(4) of EC Regulation 258/97, on the equivalence of noni juice (juice of the fruit of *Morinda citrofolia* L) grown in Hawaii and the similar product from Tahiti that had been previously assessed and cleared under the novel food procedures. The Committee agreed that they could not give an opinion on this substantial equivalence claim due to the lack of compositional data supplied by the applicant. Members requested further details of the composition of noni fruits from the two geographical regions.

The Committee met again on 17 September when they were updated on the outcome of three postal consultations on notifications under the Deliberate Release Directive 2001/18/EC. The Committee had no objections to GM maize line Bt11, and GT73 oil seed rape. However when considering GM maize line NK603 and (NK603 x MON810) hybrids, Members were not satisfied that the Committee's earlier questions on the potential allergenicity of the hybrids had been satisfactorily answered.

The Committee considered data submitted in connection with an application for the deliberate release of GM maize line 1507 under Directive 2001/18/EC. Members were concerned that both the CRY1F protein and non-allergenic protein (phosphatase) survived the simulated intestinal fluid (SIF) tests. Members therefore requested additional evidence regarding the relevance of the SIF tests which might include results obtained with other allergens/non-allergens.

Members were also asked to consider an initial opinion from the French Competent Authority on an application under the Novel Foods Regulation (EC) No.258/97 for authorisation of powdered velvet antler from red deer for use as a food supplement. The Committee agreed with the French negative opinion and echoed their concerns regarding insufficient toxicity studies, a lack of allergenicity testing, and the absence of any nutritional value.

The Committee also considered an initial opinion from the French Competent Authority on an application under the Novel Foods Regulation for authorisation of palm oil enriched in unsaponifiable matter. Members agreed that the toxicity studies were inadequate and were concerned about the apparent increase in levels of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) during the production process. It was also noted that there were no data on the presence of protein and potential allergenicity and consumption levels had not been addressed adequately.

Members additionally considered a positive initial opinion from the Finnish Competent Authority for the marketing of betaine (trimethylglycine) as a novel food ingredient. The Committee raised a number of concerns related to the nutritional and toxicological aspects of the application. Members also noted with concern the amount of betaine that could be consumed from betaine-incorporated foods based on the estimates presented in the application.

Following this the Committee discussed the proposed agenda for the forthcoming open meeting, and the Secretariat provided an update on relevant EU issues. Members were also asked to consider by postal consultation a tabled paper concerning an application for consent to market herbicide-tolerant rice for importation under the Deliberate Release Directive 2001/18/EC.