

ACMSF Forward Work Plan 2013/14

Last reviewed June 2013

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>The Committee considered horizon scanning at its January 2011 meeting. Four areas were considered based on cross-cutting themes, these were: risks presented by changes in underlying agricultural, sourcing, processing and production factors. The Committee agreed to prioritise consideration of changing food preparation techniques in the hospitality sector that may impact on microbiological food safety.</p>	<p>In January 2012 ACMSF catering Members presented the Committee with their findings on this topic.</p> <p>Following consideration of the ACMSF catering members' findings the Committee referred the issues that emerged from its discussions to a subgroup for further deliberation.</p> <p>The subgroup on raw, rare and low temperature cooked foods are currently considering the issue and expect to produce a paper by October 2013.</p>	<p>An ACMSF paper assessing the microbiological risk to consumers associated with changing food preparation techniques in the hospitality sector. Paper will be forwarded to the FSA for consideration.</p>

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
2	<p>Use of source segregated composts and anaerobic digestates in UK agriculture. Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) reports</p>	<p>ACMSF provided comment on WRAP's report on the use of source segregated composts in agriculture at its September 2010 meeting. A revised version of the report will be provided for ACMSF approval in October 2013.</p> <p>ACMSF received a presentation on WRAPs risk assessment on the quality, safety and use of digestate in UK agriculture in September 2011. The Committee has responded to the report, providing specific comments. A revised version of the report will be provided for ACMSF approval in October 2013.</p>	<p>A response from the ACMSF on the WRAP risk assessment reports. Responses will be forwarded to WRAP.</p>
3	<p>Foodborne Viral Infections</p>	<p><i>The Ad Hoc</i> Group on Foodborne Viral Infections are currently gathering evidence for their report. The subgroup is expected to present its draft report to the Committee by October 2013.</p>	<p>An ACMSF report on foodborne viral infections highlighting risks to consumers and identifying any research and surveillance gaps. Report and recommendations will be forwarded to the FSA.</p>

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
4	<p>Newly Emerging Pathogens</p> <p>The Newly Emerging Pathogens Working Group provides advice on the significance and risk from newly emerging or re-emerging pathogens through food chain exposure pathways.</p>	<p>Continuous</p> <p>The Working Group on Newly Emerging Pathogens will continue to keep a watching brief on developments concerning the risks to human health and CTX-M extended-spectrum beta-lactamase (ESBL) producing <i>E.coli</i> in the food chain.</p>	<p>The Committee to draw the FSA's attention to any risk to human health from ESBL producing <i>E.coli</i> in the food chain.</p>
5	<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>Continuous.</p>	<p>Surveillance Working Group comments on survey protocols and survey results for consideration by FSA in their microbiological food surveillance programme.</p>

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
6	<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 updates will be provided at the January and June 2013 meetings.</p> <p>The results of research to estimate the burden of foodborne disease will be presented to the Committee in Oct 2013.</p> <p>FSA and HPA reports on the Olympics and public health outcomes will be provided to the Committee in June 2013.</p>	<p>ACMSF comments on the updates it receives for the FSA's consideration.</p>
7	<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 food hygiene</p>	<p>As issues arise.</p>	<p>ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.</p>

¹ Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
	meetings.		
8	<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>	As issues arise.	ACMSF assessment of the risks in relation to significant microbiological outbreaks/incidents.
9	<p>Antimicrobial resistance</p> <p>ACMSF published a report on microbial antibiotic resistance in relation to food safety in 1999. Progress on the Committees recommendations was reviewed in 2005 and 2007.</p>	The Committee were updated on developments and emerging issues in relation to antimicrobial resistance in January 2013. The Committee agreed to set up a subgroup to consider antimicrobial resistance and food chain issues in more detail.	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.
10	<p>Q fever in unpasteurised milk and milk products</p>	The Committee will be asked to review a risk assessment on the health risks from Q fever and unpasteurised milk and milk products in June 2013.	ACMSF comments on the research and endorsement of the risk assessment output.
11	<p>Risk ranking of Ready-to-Eat foods</p>	The Committee will receive a paper on development of a relative risk ranking of foods for vulnerable groups with respect to the risk of listeriosis.	ACMSF assistance in developing the risk ranking approach.