

ACMSF Forward Work Plan 2014/15

Last reviewed January 2014

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 ACMSFs last horizon scanning exercise resulted in the establishment of a subgroup to consider the microbiological risks associated with raw, rare and low temperature cooked foods. The subgroups paper on this topic was published at the October 2013 ACMSF meeting.</p> <p>A new horizon scanning exercise to identify potential topics and emerging microbiological risks will be taken forward.</p>	Horizon scanning activity to be held by October 2014.	Short-listed priorities for horizon scanning topics.

	Topic	Progress	Expected Output
2	<p>Foodborne Viral Infections</p>	<p><i>The Ad Hoc</i> Group on Foodborne Viral Infections presented a draft version of their report to the Committee in October 2013. Members submitted written comments on the report and the prioritisation of recommendations. The subgroup is expected to present its draft final report to the Committee in January 2014.</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>
3	<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 Committee to draw the FSA's attention to any risk 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 FSA's survey on Listeria in cooked-sliced meat at its June 2014 meeting.</p> <p>Committee to consider results of UK-wide microbiological monitoring of slaughter pigs at June 2014 meeting</p>	<p>Surveillance Working Group/Committee comments on survey protocols and survey results for consideration by FSA in their microbiological food surveillance programme.</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 updates will be provided at the January and June 2014 meetings.</p> <p>The results of research to estimate the burden of foodborne disease will be presented to the Committee in June 2014.</p>	<p>ACMSF 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 food hygiene meetings.</p>	<p>As issues arise.</p> <p>Update on Codex Committee on Food Hygiene to be provided at January 2014 meeting.</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>The Committee will consider the findings from the Street spice curry leaves outbreak investigations in January 2014</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 Committees 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 subgroup to consider antimicrobial resistance and food chain issues in more detail. The subgroup have met twice and summaries of their discussions and recommendations are provided at the subsequent Committee meeting.</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 for health risk 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>

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10	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 at their January 2014 meeting.</p> <p>An update on the incidence of Listeriosis in England and Wales will also be provided in January.</p>	ACMSF assistance in developing the risk ranking approach.
11	Social science research relating to microbiological food safety risks	<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>Committee to consider findings from the recent FSA research on domestic kitchen practices at their June 2014 meeting.</p>	ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.
12	Microbiological risks from shell eggs	The Committee to assess risks associated with egg consumption at their October 2014 meeting.	ACMSF's assessment of the risks that may be associated with egg consumption.

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13	Bovine Tuberculosis (TB) vaccination field trials	AHVLA to carry out a risk assessment on the safety of meat and milk from vaccinated animals participating in the field trial. The Committee will be briefed on the proposed risk assessment (at the June 2014 meeting) and will review its outcome.	ACMSF's views will be used to inform a decision on whether meat/milk from vaccinated animals can enter the food chain.