

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD
INFORMATION PAPER

Update from the Scientific Advisory Committees

Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs met on 9 May 2014, main items discussed at this meeting included:

- Mr Phil Sketchley Chief Executive of the National Office of Animal Health (NOAH) provided the Committee with information on work the organisation had carried out on antimicrobial resistance with regard to the use of veterinary medicines. Members were informed that the European Commission is to review current legislation on veterinary medicines; he suggested that a range of antimicrobials should remain available for use in veterinary medicine and that these should be used responsibly. Additionally, the Committee was informed of work carried out by NOAH on consumer concerns. The Committee noted that although it has a peripheral interest in the subject, it was an important area and wished to be kept informed of developments.
- Chris Gordon and Claire Williams from the British Equestrian Trade Association (BETA) provided the Committee with an interesting presentation on the work of BETA including key issues faced by the Association and its members. These included, claims, labelling, and additives. ACAF Members provided advice on how BETA members could gain consistent advice on labelling issues via national forums e.g. the National Agricultural Panel.
- A Member of the Committee then gave a presentation in their expert field, explaining new plant breeding techniques and said that the legislative position for plants derived from this new technology is not entirely clear. Some of these new techniques might be adopted by industry because of the potential advantages they offered. The Committee was interested in the research and wished to be kept informed of developments.
- Finally, the Committee was provided with an oral report on the European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office audit of UK feed law enforcement that took place in January 2014. The audit covered risk management along the feed chain and dioxins monitoring. The findings of the FVO auditors are expected to be generally favourable.

Future meetings

Provisional agenda items for the meeting to be held on 22 October 2014 include:

- forward work programme;
- work of the Agricultural Industries Confederation feed sector Sustainability Committee;
- Feed Law Enforcement Review Implementation Programme; and
- FVO audit.

Advisory Committee on Novel Food and Processes (ACNFP)

The last meeting of the ACNFP was held on 16 April. Items included:

- A discussion on an opinion on Sporopollenin shells used as a carrier.
- A discussion on an opinion on bread enriched with vitamin D through treatment with ultra violet light.
- Consideration of additional information on Beta-Hydroxyubutyrate (ketone) ester
- Information on new security markings used in the civil service including the FSA.

The next meeting will be held on 26 June. Agenda items include

- Consideration of additional information on sporopollenin shells
- A discussion on the extension of use of rooster comb extract as a novel ingredient.
- An annual overview of action taken by the FSA following ACNFP advice.

Committee on Toxicity (COT)

The COT met on 13 May. The following items were discussed:

- Assessment of the adequacy of the 10-fold uncertainty factor to allow for interspecies variation in developmental toxicity
- Domoic acid (DA) in King Scallops (*Pecten Maximus*) processed in Scotland
- Scoping paper on potential risks from polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in the infant diet

The meeting scheduled for 1 July has been cancelled.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

The last GACS meeting was held on 19 March 2014. It was preceded by the GACS annual spring dinner on 18 March. Draft minutes of the open meeting will be available soon. Meeting papers are available at <http://gacs.food.gov.uk/gacsmeets/>

Agenda items included:

- Report on Science in the FSA
- Science in the SACs - update on SAC activities

- FSA evidence portfolio
- Report and recommendations from Working Group on Data Exploitation
- Report and recommendations from Working Group on Use of Science in Emergencies
- Report from new joint GACS/SSRC Working Group on Use of Evidence
- Presentation from UK Champion for Global Food Security, Professor Tim Benton
- GACS work plan (information item) - It was agreed a new working group would be set up to advise on development of the FSA's next science and evidence strategy.
- FSA Strategy workshop (closed business session) - Members of GACS and of SSRC held a closed session on the FSA strategy led by FSA Chief Executive Catherine Brown.

The GACS Chair will present his annual report to the FSA Board in September 2014. The autumn GACS meeting is scheduled for 29 October 2014.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

The SSRC had their thirteenth open meeting on the 20 March 2014.

Agenda items included:

- A Report from the Strategy Sub-Group (SSG)
- A Report from the ESRC Sub-Group (ESRC SG)
- A Presentation on a Social Media and on-line research project by Farida Vis and discussion
- A Presentation on a project to draw together what we know about in-home behavior by Lydia Martens and discussion
- Communications Activity to address Campylobacter and Evaluation of Communications Initiatives
- Update on Joint GACS/SSRC Working Group on use of evidence
- Update on actions following publication of the Agency's Forward Evidence Plan

**Secretariat
June 2014**