

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES

PAPER FOR INFORMATION

EU UPDATE

This paper provides Members with an update on novel food applications under regulation (EC) No 258/97 and other EU issues that are relevant to the work of the Committee.

Novel Food applications:

1. The Commission Working Group on Novel Foods, a group that includes representatives of all EU novel food competent authorities, met in December 2004 and reviewed the position of the current applications. With the exception of GA21 maize (see below) and isomaltulose, for which authorisation votes are expected early in 2005, the situation is as described in the table presented at the previous meeting (ACNFP/69/6).
2. The Committee first reviewed this GM maize line in 2000, when it raised various questions in relation to the initial assessment report from the Dutch competent authority. These questions and those from other member states were referred to the EU Scientific Committee on Food, which published its opinion in 2002. The ACNFP reviewed this opinion in May 2002 and noted that its earlier question, whether any tests had been carried out for oral sensitisation, had not apparently been answered. When authorisation of GA21 maize was recently listed by the European Commission as nearing completion, the Food Standards Agency sought advice from the Committee's expert on allergenicity testing, who confirmed that there were no further data that the applicant could have provided that would address this issue. In the absence of specific concerns about the allergenic and sensitising potential of this maize line, the ACNFP Chairman agreed with the conclusion that the SCF's opinion was valid.

European Food Safety Authority

3. EFSA has formally opened its new permanent headquarters in Parma, Italy and the first staff have transferred from the Authority's temporary office in Brussels. The relocation from Brussels is expected to be complete by the autumn.
4. EFSA has continued to hold further meetings of its scientific panels. The published minutes of the GMO Panel's 13th and 14th meetings, held in September and October, are attached at Annexes A and B. The EFSA Panel's final guidance on the risk assessment of food and feed derived from GM plants was published on 8 November 2004. The Panel is now turning its attention to a parallel document on GM micro-organisms and derived food and feed products.

5. EFSA's Scientific Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergy finalised its opinion on diacylglycerol rich oil (DAG-oil) in December 2004 and concluded:

"... that the product is safe for human consumption but that in order for it not to be nutritionally disadvantageous to consumers, the trans fatty acid (TFA) content should be reduced to the level in the conventional vegetable oils that the novel oil is intended to replace. Vegetable oils and liquid margarines have a low proportion of TFA, usually below 1% (NDA, 2004). The Panel notes that the applicant does not intend to use this ingredient as a fat source in infant formulae and follow-on formulae."

6. The Secretariat will examine whether this assessment involves additional information that might cause the Committee to reconsider its earlier (positive) opinion on this application and necessary will seek the Committee's advice in a future discussion paper. The EFSA Panel expects to conclude its evaluations of betaine and of lycopene from *Blakeslea trispora* in February 2005.

**Secretariat
January 2005**

Annexes attached:

Annex A – Minutes of the 13th plenary meeting of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms held on 23-24 September 2004.

Annex B – Minutes of the 14th plenary meeting of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms held on 20 October 2004.

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Minutes of the 13th plenary meeting of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms held on 23-24 September 2004.

Available at: http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/gmo/gmo_meetings/619_en.html

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Minutes of the 14th plenary meeting of the Scientific Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms held on 20 October 2004.

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