

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF OTHER ADVISORY COMMITTEES

At the December 2003 meeting of the Committee, Members received a paper (ACM/670) providing information on the work of various other advisory committees. This paper provides a brief update of the work of the following committees since the last update:

- Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)
- Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)
- Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)
- Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

**Secretariat
November 2004**

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ANIMAL FEEDINGSTUFFS (ACAF)

The Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs met five times this year.

ACAF Open meeting – 10 February 2004

Feed Law Enforcement Review – the Committee discussed the results of a preliminary modelling exercise exploring the feasibility of alternatives to the current system of feed law enforcement in the UK. The Committee considered four options for feed law enforcement aimed at improving accountability, reducing duplication of effort and providing greater consistency of standards throughout the UK. It was agreed that recommendations on any new or improved system would need to be proportionate to the risks that animal feeds can present to human health.

Proposed EC Regulation on Feed Hygiene – The Committee discussed an update paper and noted the progress of negotiations on this proposal, which aims to strengthen controls over feed safety.

Report from the GM Sub-group – The Committee received an oral update on the further advice provided by the sub-group to the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment on three applications to market GMOs. The applications related to BT 11, NK603 x MON810 and Pioneer maize line 1507, all of which are insect resistant or herbicide tolerant varieties of maize.

ACAF meeting - 20 April 2004

Feed Law Enforcement Review – the Committee continued its review of feed law enforcement in the UK by examining the possibilities of strengthening and enhancing feed law enforcement based on the current systems and organisation. The Committee highlighted problems with the current system including the means of distributing funding, the need for better accountability and the need for more comprehensive data on which to base risk assessments. The Committee concluded that overall responsibility for feed law enforcement in Great Britain should rest with one body and it endorsed some of the initiatives currently being taken forward by the Food Standards Agency and others involved in feed law enforcement such as developing a code of practice on feed law enforcement and preparing a Memorandum of Understanding between the two main bodies that carry out enforcement work in Great Britain.

ACAF meeting – 7 July 2004

Feed Law Enforcement Review – the Committee considered a first draft of its report. It was agreed that a sub-group of the Committee would help to progress work on the draft report prior to having discussions at the next ACAF meeting on 21 September 2004.

ACAF Review of On-Farm Feeding Practices – The Committee welcomed the various initiatives by the Agency as a result of its recommendations including seeking the support of the farming and enforcement bodies to the outcome of its review. In particular, it supported the proposed development of a simple,

graphic, A4 laminate summarising good/bad on-farming practices intended for farmers.

Food Standards Agency's Draft Strategic Plan 2005-2010 - The Committee endorsed aspects of the Agency's plan to focus, in the next five years, on food safety (by further reduction of foodborne illness and reduction of the occurrence of contaminants in food), consumer choice and promotion of healthy diets. Some additional points would be made to the Agency.

ACAF open meeting (Belfast) – 21 September 2004

Feed Law Enforcement Review – the Committee continued its review, agreeing a number of amendments to the second draft of its report. It was agreed that the Committee's drafting sub-group would meet again and that a revised version of the report would be put before the Committee at its next meeting in London on 30 November.

Genetically Modified Food and Feed – the Committee received a presentation from Dr Clair Baynton of the Food Standards Agency, on the EC regulations on GM food and feed and the traceability and labelling of GMOs.

European Food Safety Authority – the Committee was informed about the work of EFSA and in particular three of its scientific panels (FEEDAP, CONTAM and the GMO Panel) of most relevance to the work of the Committee. The Committee agreed to explore ways of exchanging relevant information with them.

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) – ACAF member Dr Bruce Cottrill updated the Committee on the work of SACN's Vitamin A sub-group, which he had been co-opted onto in order to assist with consideration of the impact of animal feeding practices on levels of Vitamin A in liver from farm animals.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES (ACNFP)

The Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes has met four times this year.

Items of the agenda's included:

- Lycopene from *Blakeslea trispora*
- Hawaiian noni juice: further data
- DHA-rich oil from *Ulkenia* sp.
- Chia seed
- EU Update
- Antibiotic resistance genes as marker genes in genetically modified plants
- Update of current novel food applications
- GM Potato clone EH92-52
- Draft guidance document for the risk assessment of genetically modified plants and derived food and feed

COMMITTEE ON TOXICITY OF CHEMICALS IN FOOD, CONSUMER PRODUCTS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The Committee has met four times between January and September 2004. On the 2 and 3 of February it held its Out of Town Meeting at the Marriott Hotel in Cardiff and three meetings were held at Aviation House on the 20 April, 25 May and the 7 September.

The issues discussed at the full COT meeting on the 2 of February included:

- the literature update on Toxicogenomics/proteomics/metabonomics;
- a study to investigate unusual responses in the lipophilic shellfish toxin mouse bioassay;
- a review of toxicological data on Tetrabisphe­nol A;
- proposal item for a study on erythritol in children;
- the update on adverse trends in the development of the male reproductive system;

and the Annual Report of the Committees on Toxicity, Mutagenicity and Carcinogenicity for 2003.

An open meeting of the new Working Group on Variability and Uncertainty in Toxicology (VUT) was held on the 3rd. Stakeholders were able to hear presentations on the issues of relevance to the groups work and contribute to the discussions. A report of the meeting was published on the COT website.

The issues discussed at the meeting in April included:

- disinfection products in water;
- additional information on dietary phosphate;
- a revised draft statement on adverse trends in the development of the male reproductive system – potential chemical causes;
- a toxicological evaluation of a pilot study for a breast milk archive;
- adverse reactions to acid sweets;
- a revised paper on Tryptophan and Eosinophilia-Myalgia Syndrome; and
- the FSA draft strategic plan.

The discussion on disinfection products in water was held in closed session but a member of the press was admitted for the Chairman's summing up.

At its meeting in May the COT considered the following issues:

- the use of PAVA (Nonivamide) as an incapacitant spray;
- a redrafted SHASU study on chlorination disinfection by-products and birth outcomes in three water areas in England;
- a review of toxicological data on tetrabromobisphenol A; and

- the discussions from the previous meeting on the breast milk archive study and adverse reactions to acid sweets was continued.

The papers on PAVA and disinfection products were held in closed session.

No members of the public or media attended this meeting.

At the meeting in September the Committee continued its discussion from the previous meetings reviewing literature update on Toxicogenomics/proteomics/metabonomics and the use of PAVA as an incapacitant spray. They also considered the following issues:

- the use of statistics and bioinformatics in 'omics technologies;
- additional information on phosphorus in food supplements;
- reducing uncertainty in chemical exposure assessment;
- Newlase – the analytic method to detect rhizoxin;
- a study on pesticides and bystander exposure by the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution; and
- a study on nanoscience and nanotechnology by the Royal Society.

The paper on PAVA was held in closed session.

No members of the public or media attended this meeting. Representatives from the Company producing Newlase were present for this agenda item.

The Committee met again on Tuesday 26 October in Aviation House. A report of this meeting will be included in the next update paper.

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NUTRITION (SACN)

The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) has held three meetings this year. One of these meetings was open to the public. The first meeting next year will be held in February.

Items of the agenda's included:

- ACNFP/SACN Subgroup on Nutritional Assessment of Novel Foods (AFNNOF)
- NDNS Report
- Folic acid and Prevention of Disease
- Food and Health Action Plan
- Nutrition and Health Claims Proposal
- Promotion of Foods to Children update
- DRVs energy: WHO/FAO publication of energy
- FICS report
- Obesity reports

SACN works from a presumption of openness therefore virtually all documents are available to the public. These can be accessed at their website www.sacn.gov.uk.