Committed *since 2002*
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe

Challenging Boundaries in Risk Assessment

Tony Hardy and Hubert Deluyker

7 – 8 November 2012
Parma

Conference Aims

European Food Safety Authority

- To celebrate EFSA's 10th Anniversary and its achievements and to look forward to new developments

- To bring scientists together to discuss the boundaries in risk assessment in food safety
  - ✓ representing different institutions and geographical areas: national, EU or international agencies and beyond Europe
  - ✓ representing different disciplines: within the remit of EFSA and beyond
  - ✓ scientific boundaries: e.g. academic vs. regulatory

Geographical and institutional boundaries

- Contributions from 15 universities in 9 countries (of which 3 are non-EU)

- Contributions from 20 public sector organisations including

  - ✓ Commission and 5 EU Agencies
  - ✓ 10 Member States - national agencies/institutes
  - ✓ 2 non-EU countries - agency and department
  - ✓ 2 international organisations - FAO, WHO

Q Is this breadth wide enough?

Discipline boundaries

European Food Safety Authority

- **Overcome boundaries amongst different scientific disciplines leading to multidisciplinary working**

- **EFSA's fundamental mode of operation:**
  - ✓ **Multidisciplinary collaborative groupings of experts on its sector Panels each with their working groups**
  - ✓ **Scientific Committee for overarching issues**

- **Stimulated debate amongst scientists working in different domains: different groups brought together in topical parallel sessions**

Q Could we do more to foster greater interdisciplinary exchange?

Scientific boundaries: Methods

- **Bridging from academic research to regulatory science**
  - ✓ **tiered approach**
  - ✓ **bottom up versus top down**
  - ✓ **for acceptance of new methods: validation and realistic expectations and timelines are key**

- **Multi chemical, biological and other stressors versus single hazard approach – to be evidence-based:**
  - ✓ **hazard characterisation – mode of action based**
  - ✓ **exposure - biomonitoring**

- **Harmonisation and consistency in implementing the new approaches to safety testing in a regulatory environment which is currently sectorial i.e. product use-based**

Scientific boundaries: Data

- **Environmental risk assessment and monitoring: who hosts what data?**

- **Exposure assessment: databases**

  - ✓**mixtures – Total Diet Studies**
  - ✓**Gene sequencing of pathogens**
  - ✓**biomonitoring**

Dialogue with Risk Managers, Communication in General

- **Problem formulation**
  - ✓ **defining e.g. level of environmental protection sought , disease burden reduction and**
  - ✓ **fitness for purpose e.g. on efficacy**
- **Communication and weighing of risks against other elements**:
  - ✓ **consistent terminology**
  - ✓ **socio-economic, weighing of risks versus benefits, impact assessment**
  - ✓ **transparency of risk management**

Achievement

We have had a very good, enjoyable, interactive and wide-ranging conference: good basis to further foster scientific cooperation

Much to summarise and reflect on from this varied programme across the wide spectrum of EFSA's scientific activities

Recurrent themes

- **Regular future science conferences e.g. every 2 to 3 years**

- **Could consider specific themes:**
  - ✓ **Questioning fitness for purpose**
  - ✓ **Increasing volume of data production (technology driven), need for standardised and open access data bases**

When will this new testing framework be in place?