

Parma, 27 July 2010

EFSA Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection
The 20th meeting
Held in Madrid on 22-23 June 2010

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PARTICIPANTS:

Members and other National, ECDC or Commission representatives:

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Observers:

Knezevic Drazen (Croatia), Guzin Sahin (Turkey), Fetsch Alexandra (Expert), Annemarie Käsbohrer (Expert), Sobrino Odon (Expert).

EFSA:

Pia Mäkelä (Chair), Frank Boelaert, Pierre-Alexandre Belœil, Fabrizio Abbinante, Elena Mazzolini, Gabriele Zancanaro (Science), Marco Leoni (Information Technology), Miriam Grasselli and Simona Fusar Poli (Administration).

MINUTES:

The chair opened the meeting by welcoming the Task Force (TF) members and observers.

1. Minutes from the last meeting

Comments previously received by email from the Member States (MSs) were taken into account in the new version of the minutes, which have been uploaded on Scienonet. No additional comments were received at the meeting and the minutes will be published on the EFSA website.

2. Declaration of interest

None of the participants declared an additional interest related to the subjects of the meeting.

3. Feedback from the reporting of zoonoses, food-borne outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance for the year 2009 within the framework of Directive 2003/99/EC

Release of the new zoonoses web application

The new zoonoses web application was released by EFSA on 8 April. Fabrizio Abbinante presented the outcome of the reporting using the new zoonoses web application and the results of the validation exercise performed by EFSA on data submitted for 2009:

- there were only minor problems mainly involving the creation of the PDF files and the calculation of N and n in the antimicrobial tables.

- Fabrizio Abbinante informed the meeting that all the MSs had already received a letter from EFSA asking for corrections and clarification of the data submitted for 2009. In this context, MSs were invited to use the “row comment” and/or the “footnote” fields when the corrections requested by EFSA cannot be implemented, as justifications given only by email are time consuming.

Salmonella reporting

In 2009, after the first three years of the *Salmonella* control programmes in breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus*, the achievement of the target has to be verified by EFSA. Pierre-Alexandre Beloeil presented the validation of data submitted for *Salmonella* in *Gallus gallus*. Main issues encountered were missing data for breeding flocks and inconsistencies between “reported” and “existing” flock numbers. Some TF members requested the clarification of whether existing flocks” and/or “flocks under the programme” have to be reported, and also whether the “number of existing flocks” or the “number of tested flocks” has to be used as a denominator for the prevalence calculation. Moreover, for laying hens some TF members requested to know which data was used as a basis for the target verification calculation. Finally, the issue on how to report flocks with more than one serovar isolated was raised. The Commission informed the meeting that the years that are to be taken account of, and other definitions, are in the current legislation but the Commission is available for producing a further clarifying document. EFSA will also improve the wording for the sake of comprehension of the definitions. As the reporting of existing flocks is not mandatory for broilers and laying hens EFSA will use a surrogate to calculate prevalence and MSs will be contacted for approval of the data to be used for target verification and the way in which the target verification is to be made before drafting the 2009 CSR.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) reporting

EFSA suggested that qualitative reporting may not be required if data are the same as in the quantitative reporting. However, MSs are invited to report any additional AMR information based only on qualitative data.

4. Needs for the revision of the zoonoses reporting web application for 2010 data reporting – technical needs, migration of historical data to the new database

Fabrizio Abbinante informed the TF of the foreseen web application improvements due to legislative changes, new reporting requests and/or comments from MSs. The following points were discussed regarding modifications in the zoonoses web application.

Migration of historic data

The migration of historical data is foreseen to be finalised next year; therefore it is not possible at present to amend historical data through the new application. EFSA will send to MSs the link for the old application enabling the visualisation of data for previous years.

Historic data migration in the new web application is challenging because the previous reporting structure does not always match the new system’s structure. MS requests for data extraction, e.g. for *Salmonella* control programmes, will always be possible for all reported data. Data that will be migrated in the new format will also be amendable, whereas those not fitting the new format will not be amendable. Only the last version of a report including the amended data will be migrated. TF members suggested prioritising historical data migration by year and by zoonosis and EFSA will make a proposal for the historical data migration.

PDF generation

Currently all MS reporting officers can create the full PDF. It was suggested that only the official reporting officers be granted the right to generate the full PDF. The TF members agreed on the proposal. Furthermore, for better coordination at country level and to avoid unnecessary printing, MSs suggested that the generated PDF should be visible to all reporters within a country.

User Management

Due to confidentiality necessities the accounts for reporters were added to the new system by EFSA. Next year it will not be necessary to re-create all the accounts and MSs will be given the possibility to add reporter accounts to the database.

MSs suggested some improvements to the management of user privileges when accessing tables and text forms in read or write mode. EFSA will take them into account for next year.

XML reporting

Two MSs used the XML data transmission. EFSA plans to extend the XML reporting to serovars and phage types in 2011 and to all other tables and text forms in 2012. EFSA will also organise a meeting with IT experts from MSs to discuss the future steps of the XML reporting and will make a proposal for a meeting date in September; TF members are recalled to invite their IT experts.

5. Presentations from Member States: feed-related risk factors and potential *Salmonella* spp. sources of contamination in Spanish feed mill and feeding-stuffs. Spain

Odón Sobrino from Spain presented a national baseline study on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in feed mills. Results disclosed that in Spain the *Salmonella* serovar frequency distribution does not reflect that of public health importance. The lack of Community legislation as regards feed was also pointed out. The Commission informed the meeting that a proposal for microbiological criteria in feed is in the process of being drafted.

6. Outcome from the discussion on reports on the development of harmonised schemes for the monitoring and reporting of *Echinococcus* and *Cysticercus* in animals – need to change the reporting and web application – inclusion of reporting on region based data and data on lightly/heavily contaminated carcasses

Fifteen MSs are able to give the information on *Echinococcus* in animals at regional level, as most of the monitoring is done on foxes and is associated with the rabies control programme, which is a regional based monitoring. Reporting at regional level is not mandatory for these zoonoses, therefore the introduction of two or three NUTS levels was suggested together with allowing MSs to set the level of reporting. However, most MSs do not have data on low and heavy *Cysticercus* infested carcasses, hence it was decided not to include this information in the current reporting system with special columns. EFSA informed the meeting that the amount of *Cysticercus* infestation can still be reported in the comments or footnotes.

7. Other possible modifications of the web application

- ***Inclusion of possible reporting of MRSA.*** Ten MSs would like to report on MRSA under the framework of annual reporting. EFSA will update the pick list for the prevalence tables for this purpose. MSs also suggested adding a specific chapter in the reporting manual on MRSA.
- ***Updating epidemiological cut-off values.*** Austria suggested updating the MIC cut-off value of tetracycline for enterococci according to the EUCAST publication and MSs agreed on updating all the thresholds used for AMR data analysis according to EUCAST. Finally, it was suggested that EFSA's technical specifications on AMR monitoring for the indicator should be reviewed as regards the selection of slaughterhouses. These issues will be discussed by the forthcoming WG on AMR.
- ***Changes in pick lists: addition of fresh cheeses.*** The Chair explained that fresh cheese is not a soft or semi-soft cheese but a just-produced cheese, normally within the previous five days, so EFSA will extend the pick list to include "fresh cheese".
- ***Food data reported differently for market specification.*** France proposed to breakdown further "retail" by type of market. As splitting variables then requires all levels to be filled and ZCC worries that excessive fragmentation might reduce the power of data analysis, EFSA will add "at retail (at market)" to the pick list but no further splitting of retail will be implemented and additional information can be reported in the notes.

8. Discussion on the report on the development of a harmonised scheme for the monitoring and reporting of Q fever in animals

Pierre-Alexandre Beloeil gave a presentation on the Q-fever Article 36 report from the Consortium that published jointly with AHAW an opinion on Q-fever. The report gives a case definition of infected flock/herd including clinical symptoms and laboratory tests.

EFSA will make a proposal on how to report the flock/herd level for Q-fever monitoring and how to implement it at national level. The proposal will be discussed at the next TF meeting.

9. Discussion on the analyses of baseline surveys on *Salmonella* in breeding pigs and *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in broilers

Baseline surveys on Campylobacter in broilers

Frank Boelaert presented the results of the 2008 broiler carcass *Campylobacter* baseline survey, part B report analyses. In carcasses the risk of both *Campylobacter* contamination and high counts was strongly correlated with the *Campylobacter*-colonisation status of the broiler batch. The sensitivity of the method for *Campylobacter* detection of broiler carcass samples was investigated by Bayesian modelling. Results pointed out that the detection method sensitivity varied importantly among MSs. During the discussion TF members observed that countries of known low *Campylobacter* prevalence are penalised by the estimated sensitivity, thus advising revision of the chapter. EFSA will contact the WG to address TF comments.

Baseline survey on Salmonella in broilers

Frank Boelaert presented the results of the 2008 broiler carcass *Salmonella* baseline survey, part B report analyses.

Gabriele Zancanaro from the Assessment Methodology unit of EFSA presented the modelling exercise aimed to link results of the baseline survey of *Salmonella* in broiler carcasses and the process hygiene criteria (PHC) at slaughterhouse with the scope of estimating probability to meet PHC with a given prevalence of *Salmonella*-contaminated carcasses and vice versa; examples were given. The stochastic model does not need to account for any slaughterhouse effect as it links two estimates from samples collected at the same point in the slaughter chain. The Chair underlined that meeting current PHC requires a very low prevalence of *Salmonella*-contaminated broiler carcasses.

Baseline surveys on Salmonella in breeding pigs

Frank Boelaert presented state of progress of the analyses of the 2008 breeding pigs *Salmonella* baseline survey, part B report. Risk factors are analysed at pen level. Several potential risk factors for *Salmonella* pen contamination were disclosed. The population attributable factor was also calculated in order to have an idea of the impact of a specific risk factor on the overall risk. The TF suggested to also describe in the report some comparison with the *Salmonella* baseline survey results in slaughter pigs.

10. Discussion on the draft report on survey methods for pathogens in food

Annemarie Käsbohrer from BfR described the structure and contents of the Article 36 report on survey methods for pathogens in food. The report has three parts and Section B is intended for EU surveys with specific chapters for objectives, sampling frame, sampling design, sample collection, laboratory testing and results reporting. Section C of the report is for individual country surveys and also contains suggestions for the checking of microorganisms. The Chair underlined that Section C is to be considered a tool for best practices for surveys in single MSs. MSs are invited to comment the report by **Wednesday, 2 July 2010** (to zoonoses@efsa.europa.eu).

The Commission reminded EFSA to clearly indicate in the report and on the EFSA website that Article 36 reports are different to EFSA opinions/reports.

11. Progress reports from working groups:

Reporting of food-borne outbreaks

The chair gave an update on the progress made in the revision of the reporting specifications. The TF will be consulted about the issues in the autumn.

Antimicrobial resistance data analyses

The WG on AMR will be set soon and specific objectives will focus on the main issues encountered while drafting the AMR reports.

12. Information from contract projects:

- ***Analyses of Salmonella serovar data and the source attribution analyses.*** EFSA informed the meeting that work is ongoing and that a report is due by the end of year.
- ***Reporting of vector-borne zoonoses.*** The contractor is carrying out a questionnaire survey that is under MS consultation until the end of August.

- **Microbiological contaminants in food.** The TF and SCFCAH were consulted and both were in favour of an in-depth analysis on microbiological contamination in food. The call will be launched mid-July.
- **Statistical analyses of achieving the reduction target.** The methodology has to use aggregated data to assess the verification of the targets meeting and the report will be finalised during the summer.
- **Statistical analyses on antimicrobial resistance data.** The analysis aims to link baseline estimated prevalence with AMR and to estimate AMR temporal changes. The report is due by the beginning of next year.
- **Assistance in the preparation of Community Summary Reports.** The Chair informed that two contractors had to be recruited. The Veterinary Laboratory Agency was chosen to assist EFSA with AMR data analysis, whereas the call for assistance in the zoonoses and FBO 2011 report is ongoing.

13. Information on a new mandate from the Commission on public health hazards to be covered by meat inspection

The Commission aims to modernise meat inspection legislation. EFSA is asked for scientific advice on hazards that should be covered by a slaughterhouse meat inspection. EFSA has agreed internally to produce six opinions supported by six technical reports according to animal species. BIOHAZ panel will lead the opinions and the Zoonoses unit will lead the six technical reports to be delivered.

The TF was invited to suggest candidate experts in the field of meat inspection, public health, and epidemiology and data analysis for the Zoonoses unit working group by **Friday, 9 July 2010** (to zoonoses@efsa.europa.eu). Also a call for data not previously reported is planned by EFSA through SCFCAH.

14. Any other business

Request to prepare a scientific article for Listeria

The oral communication on “*Listeria monocytogenes* in food and animals in the European Union in 2008”, was selected by the Editor of the *International Journal of Food Microbiology* for a special issue. The communication was based on the results of the CSR 2008 already published in the EFSA Journal and no further analysis is forecast. The Chair asked for permission to submit the full paper. Most TF members agreed upon the proposal and some members will still discuss this issue at national level.

2008 AMR draft report

The second consultation of the “Community Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from animals and food in the EU in 2008” was extended to **Wednesday, 30 June 2010** (comments to zoonoses@efsa.europa.eu).