

## MINUTES OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE DISCUSSION GROUP ON FOOD CHEMICAL OCCURRENCE DATA

**Tele-conference, 6 October 2021**

**(Agreed on 27 October 2021)**

### Participants

#### ■ Discussion Group Members

Organisation	Name
AMFEP – Association of Manufacturers and Formulations of Enzyme Products	Celine Benini
AESGP - Association of the European Self-Medication Industry	Mihai Ioniță
BEUC - The European Consumer Organisation	Gemma Trigueros
CEFIC - European Chemical Industry Council	Miguel Angel Prieto Arranz
SPIRITS Europe	Mario Gregori
EU-SFI - EU Speciality Food Ingredients	Joanna Jaskolska
FEDIOL - The EU Vegetable Oil and Proteinmeal Industry	Kalila Hajjar
FDE - FoodDrinkEurope	Rebeca Fernandez Luca Terzi
FSE - Food Supplements Europe	Patrick Coppens
EDA – European Dairy Association	Christian Bruun Kastrup
SNE - Specialised Nutrition Europe	Evangelia Mavromichali
UNESDA - Union of European Soft Drinks Association	Patrice Commarmond

## ■ **Apologies**

NATCOL – The Natural Food Colours Association, Food Service Europe and THIE – Tea and Herbal Infusions Europe

## ■ **Observers**

Ivana Poustkova (DG Sante), Catherine Evrevin (DG Sante), Karin Krahenbuehl (Chair of SNE Working Group)

## ■ **Representatives/observers from the European Food Safety Authority**

Doreen Russell (Chair), Saba Giovannacci, Ana Lambergar, Mary Gilsean, Vaia Mitoula, Jose Angel Gomez Ruiz, Giulio di Piazza, Claudia Cascio Evidence Management (DATA) Unit

Alexandra Tard, Yi Liu, Katharina Volk Food Ingredients and Packaging (FIP) Unit

## **1. Welcome, apologies for absence, adoption of the agenda**

The Chair welcomed the participants to the 8th meeting of the EFSA Stakeholder Discussion Group on Food Chemical Occurrence Data. She presented information concerning changes to new members and replacements in the group. Apologies are received from NATCOL, Food Service Europe and THIE. The agenda for the 8th meeting was outlined and adopted by the participants.

## **2. Update on food additives**

Alexandra Tard provided an update on the status of the food additives re-evaluation programme. She underlined that the work programme has been significantly affected by applications received for new additives (including extension of use) and flavourings, follow up work on additives that have already been re-evaluated (particularly with respect to infants and young children), changes to sectorial guidance and the on-going evaluations of the intense sweeteners including the call for data on genotoxicity.

The 2022 work programme was introduced and the new/updated tools namely DietEx and FAIM 2.1 were also described.

In the discussion that followed: SNE asked if there would be a call for data soon for infants and young children for E 472c (citric acid esters of mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids). EFSA replied that it is in the work programme for follow up but is pending due to the workload of the Panel. UNESDA asked if the request for data to update the genotoxicity data in sweeteners would apply to other food additives. EFSA advised that studies examined indicated a need to obtain data on genotoxicity for certain compounds as other data could not remove the possibility of genotoxic compounds. However, the call for data on genotoxicity can be considered as ad-hoc and does not relate to other food additives. EU-SFI asked a question concerning the timelines for sweeteners (Saccharin) to which EFSA confirmed it was re-scheduled for 2022/2023.

## **3. Food enzyme exposure assessment**

Yi Liu presented an update on food enzyme dietary exposure assessment to the meeting. She outlined the presence of food enzymes in different food sector areas and that enzymes not added to food as consumed is a challenge in conducting exposure estimations. The completed and ongoing calls for input data for the exposure assessments for food enzymes were shown and an update on the new enzyme guidance documents presented.

In light of the information presented FEDIOL advised that there had been some challenges in responding to the calls for data, but this will be followed-up and asked about timelines for the call and how to proceed if data providers haven't been able to provide the data as yet. EFSA advised that the timeline is short since work has already started on the analysis and suggested liaising with

AMFEP. On this point, AMFEP extended the offer to assist any sector on the call for data on conversion factors. FDE advised that many of their sectors intend to respond to the call and EDA also said they had been in touch with EFSA. EFSA assured the meeting that it is available to clarify any issues that come up within the sector or if further clarity is required can arrange a technical dialogue within the period the call is active.

## 4. ONE – Health, Environment, Society – Conference 2022

Doreen Russell provided a short introduction to and update on the current arrangements and state of play concerning the organisation of the ONE Conference 2022. The conference is planned as both a physical and online event and will take place on 21-24 June 2022 in Brussels. Further details of the event, including the outline scientific programme are available on the conference website

<https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/news/one-health-environment-society-conference-2022>

## 5. Chemical contaminants

### ■ Food contact materials

Katharina Volk gave an update on the mandate for the preparation for the re-evaluation of phthalates, structurally similar substances and replacement substances potentially used as plasticisers in food contact materials (FCMs). She explained how this first part of the 2-step mandate is divided into 3 tasks: 1) identification and prioritisation of substances, 2) development of protocols for exposure and hazard assessment and 3) call for data in support of the exposure assessment. The second part of the 2-step mandate will then comprise the actual assessment(s) of risks to public health from the presence of prioritised substances, originating from FCM, in foodstuffs. The work on the different tasks of the mandate is conducted in close collaboration with ECHA (European Chemicals Agency).

Two calls for data in support of the exposure assessment of the prioritised substances are foreseen: 1) to collect occurrence data in food (as part of the annual call for continuous collection for chemical contaminants in food and feed), 2) to collect information/data on concentration in and migration from FCMs (as an ad-hoc call for data).

In the discussion that followed CEFIC asked if EFSA is planning to also collect data on toxicological aspects. EFSA replied that within the preparatory work of this mandate only exposure related information/data will be collected. However, in the context of the development of the hazard assessment protocol (to be kicked off in November 2021), appropriate methods to retrieve relevant toxicological data will be considered and may include e.g. literature review, calls for data etc. Furthermore, CEFIC asked if ECHA would also launch calls for data in relation to this mandate. EFSA responded that there is indeed a close collaboration with ECHA in addressing the different tasks, but that the calls for data linked to the context of this mandate will be launched by EFSA. It is not expected that ECHA will launch additional calls. FDE asked about the second call for data (i.e. ad-hoc call on information/data on concentration in and migration from FCMs) and wondered if stakeholders can provide input on the development of the new data model. EFSA replied that a consultation with industry on the data model is currently not foreseen. It was highlighted that a guidance is currently being developed, intended to facilitate understanding of the data model parameters and to provide instructions on the use of the template for the submission of relevant data. CEFIC asked about the timelines of the calls for data which was duly clarified by EFSA.

BEUC made an intervention regarding mineral oils which are also present in some food contact materials: consequently, how could this data be evaluated. EFSA clarified that the focus of the mandate on mineral oils is their presence in food and although we have data on food contact materials which the working group are looking at, the focus remains on presence in food. However, presence in food contact materials could be considered in the future.

## ■ Chemical contaminants

Vaia Mitoula provided an overview of chemical contaminants collected as part of the 2021 Chemical Monitoring data collection. She highlighted the priority substances for which a shorter deadline for data transmission was sought and presented some feedback with respect to this in relation to Nitrosamines in food and Mineral Oil Hydrocarbons in food. High-level details about the 2021 Chemical Monitoring data collection were provided.

FEDIOL thanked EFSA for support provided during the data collection and asked about the consultation on the publication of chemical contaminant data and how this will be addressed in the context of the call for data. EFSA explained the consultation and publication concerns competent authorities in the Member States and their data transmitted to EFSA. Nonetheless, data publication is of interest to the Discussion Group and EFSA suggested to include it as an agenda item at next years' meeting.

Under the Transparency Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 EFSA has an obligation to publish data/evidence after a scientific output is published but data providers can submit a confidentiality request when data are transmitted to EFSA.

With respect to this requirement, on 20 July 2021 EFSA organised an information session with the Discussion Group on confidentiality requests for data under Regulation (EU) 2019/1381 (Transparency Regulation) and introduced the EFSA tool – Portalino - for submitting confidentiality claims to be assessed by EFSA. During the session, participants were advised of the practical arrangements regarding confidentiality requests for data to which the Transparency Regulation applies and the process of submitting a confidentiality request in the EFSA tool.

## 6. SNE challenges on the data collection of Mineral oils residues in foods for infants and young children

Evangelia Mavromichali (SNE Secretariat) and Karin Kraehenbueh (Chair SNE Safety Working Group) shared the challenges they encountered in the collection of data on mineral oils. In particular, the laboratory analysis, for example reporting the sum of MOSH/MOAH and the lack of standardised methods for reporting a certain quantitative analysis as well as the reporting of the results to EFSA. Observations from this experience of collecting and reporting data to EFSA were shared with the meeting as well as conclusions and suggestions.

Relating to the SNE presentation and the previous EFSA presentation on contaminants the following points were raised.

Regarding the presentation from SNE, FEDIOL thanked the presenters and mentioned that they have written a letter to EFSA highlighting the lack of harmonised approach in laboratories and reproducibility of analytical results at a low level. It is a complex data collection as illustrated in the analysis shown by SNE thus it is important that these types of elements are considered.

EFSA thanked all the data providers for the efforts to send data on mineral oils and advised the meeting that it is aware of the technical complexity of this data collection. The concerns raised today are mirrored by other data providers and all this information will be considered in the risk assessment and in the uncertainty analysis. There are intense discussions in the EFSA working group addressing the mandate about hazard identification and there will be some guidance provided in the output that can be taken into consideration in future opinions.

## 7. Any Other Business

The Chair thanked the discussion group and the presenters for their input and contributions to the meeting. The presentations given at the meeting will be available to the discussion group in Teams channel created for this group in the coming days while the minutes would be shared with the group for their comments prior to publication on the EFSA website.

The Chair also advised the participants that the mandate of this Discussion Group, established in 2019 for 3 years in accordance with the EFSA stakeholder engagement approach, will expire at the end of 2021. As such, a new call for expressions of interest in joining the group will commence in early 2022.