



SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

MINUTES OF THE 118TH PLENARY MEETING

Audio-web conference, 23-25 November 2021

(Agreed on 15 December 2021)

Participants

■ Panel Members:

Margherita Bignami, Laurent Bodin, Kevin Chipman, Jesús Del Mazo, Bettina Grasl-Kraupp, Christer Hogstrand, Ron Hoogenboom, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Carlo Nebbia, Elsa Nielsen, Evangelia Ntzani, Annette Petersen, Salomon Sand¹, Dieter Schrenk, Tanja Schwerdtle, Christiane Vleminckx and Heather Wallace.

■ Hearing Experts²:

Not applicable

■ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Frans Verstraete, Veerle Vanheusden and Ivana Poustkova (European Commission, DG Health and Food Safety, Unit E2).

■ EFSA:

BIOCONTAM Unit:

Maria Anastassiadou, Marco Binaglia, Anna Christodoulidou, Federico Cruciani, Ernesto Liebana Criado, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi, Elena Rovesti, Katja Schirmer and Hans Steinkellner.

DATA Unit:

Zsuzsanna Horvath (for Item 7.2), Francesca Riolo (for item 7.3.), Claudia Cascio (for Item 7.4), Sofia Ioannidou and Marina Nikolič (for Item 7.5.), and Mary Gilsenan.

■ Observers:

Not applicable

¹ Attendance on 23 and 25 November only.

² As defined in Article 17 of the Decision of the Executive Director concerning the selection of members of the Scientific Committee, the Scientific Panels, and the selection of external experts to assist EFSA with its scientific work: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/expertselection.pdf

■ **Others:**

Not applicable.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. No apologies were received.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence³ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁴, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Panel members invited to the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the members at the beginning of this meeting.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 117th Plenary meeting held on 14-16.09.2021

The minutes of the 117th Plenary meeting⁵ held on 14-16 September 2021 were agreed by the CONTAM Panel on 30 September 2021.

5. Report on written procedures since the 117th Plenary meeting held on 14-16.09.2021

Not applicable.

6. New mandates

The CONTAM Team Leader presented the following new mandates received from the EC:

1. Request for technical assistance to the Commission (Article 31 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002) for a statement on the conclusions of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Meeting on Tropane Alkaloids.

A draft Scientific Report will be prepared by the CONTAM Team and presented to the Panel for possible endorsement.

2. Request for technical assistance to the Commission (Article 31 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002) on a recent publication revisiting the evidence for genotoxicity of acrylamide.

An EFSA WG was set up to address the request. A draft Scientific Report will be prepared by the WG and presented to the Panel for possible endorsement.

³ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf

⁴ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf

⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/116th-plenary-meeting-contam-panel>

3. Request for an assessment of an application of feed detoxification process for compliance with the acceptability criteria provided for in Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/786 of 19 May 2015.

The CONTAM Panel agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to allocate the mandate to the WG on Feed Detoxification.

4. Request for a scientific opinion on the risks for animal health and transfer from feed to food of animal origin related to the presence of bromine in feed, in particular in algae and seaweed and derived products.

The CONTAM Panel agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to establish an *ad hoc* WG for the preparation of the Scientific Opinion. A WG Chair will be nominated in due time.

5. Request for a scientific opinion on the risks for animal health related to the presence of ergot alkaloids in feed.

The CONTAM Panel agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to establish an *ad hoc* WG for the preparation of the Scientific Opinion. A WG Chair will be nominated in due time.

6. Request for a scientific opinion on the risks for animal health and transfer from feed to food of animal origin related to the presence of ochratoxin A.

The CONTAM Panel agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to establish an *ad hoc* WG for the preparation of the Scientific Opinion. A WG Chair will be nominated in due time.

7. Request for an assessment of information as regards the toxicity of fumonisins for pigs, poultry and horses and, if needed, to update the scientific opinion on the risks to animal health related to the presence of fumonisins, their modified forms and hidden forms in feed.

8. Request for an assessment of information as regards the toxicity of deoxynivalenol for horses and poultry other than laying hens and, if needed, to update the scientific opinion on the risks to human and animal health related to the presence of deoxynivalenol and its acetylated and modified forms in food and feed.

9. Request for an assessment of information as regards the toxicity of T-2 and HT-2 toxin for ruminants.

The Panel agreed with the proposal of the Secretariat to establish a single *ad hoc* WG addressing the three latter mandates.

7. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion and possible adoption

7.1. Assessment of an application of a detoxification process of groundnut press cake for aflatoxins by ammoniation (EFSA-Q-2020-00504)⁶

The Chair of the WG on Feed detoxification presented the draft opinion assessing the application of a detoxification process for aflatoxins in groundnut press cake by ammoniation. The CONTAM Panel adopted the opinion pending minor changes to be implemented. The Chair of the Panel thanked the WG and EFSA staff for their work.

7.2. Hydroxymethylfurfural in feed for bees (EFSA-Q-2020-00510)⁷

The Chair of the WG on hydroxymethylfurfural (HMF) presented the sections on exposure, uncertainty analysis, summary and abstract for possible endorsement. The

⁶ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2020-00504>

⁷ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2020-00510>

sections were endorsed pending minor amendments suggested by the Panel. The Panel endorsed the opinion for public consultation.

7.3. Risk assessment of N-nitrosamines in food (EFSA-Q-2020-00665)⁸

The Chair of the WG on nitrosamines in food presented the sections of supporting information, toxicokinetics, genotoxicity and toxicity in experimental animals for possible endorsement. In addition, the proposed approach for hazard characterization and the data provided to EFSA and the preliminary exposure to individual N-nitrosamines were presented to the Panel. The Panel endorsed selected sections and provided some general feedback. The WG will continue with the development of the risk assessment.

7.4. Draft protocol for the risk assessment of grayanotoxins in certain honey (EFSA-Q-2020-00509)⁹

The Chair of the WG on grayanotoxins presented the proposed approach to take for the assessment to the CONTAM Panel. Due to time constraints the assessment protocol could not be discussed and Panel Members were asked to submit comments for discussion at the 119th Panel meeting.

7.5. Update of the risk assessment of polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs) in food (EFSA-Q-2018-0432)¹⁰

The Chair of the WG on Brominated flame retardants (BFRs) presented the sections on Toxicokinetics and Toxicity in experimental animals for possible endorsement, and the sections on data submitted to EFSA, exposure assessment and other for first reading. A presentation of the available epidemiological data and the possible approach to be followed was also provided. The Panel endorsed selected sections and provided some general feedback. The WG will continue with the development of the risk assessment.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/ Scientific Panels, CONTAM Working Groups, EFSA, the European Commission

8.1. European Commission

The European Commission representative gave an extensive update on the activities in relation to the scientific opinions of the CONTAM Panel. Several amendments of current legislation are under discussion with the Member States as an outcome of the CONTAM Panel scientific opinions.

8.2. Update from CONTAM Panel Working Groups

- **WG on Brominated flame retardants in food**

See item 7.5.

- **WG on Feed detoxification**

The WG Chair informed the Panel that the WG initiated its assessment on a new dossier concerning a process for dioxin decontamination of fish oil and vegetable oil and fats.

⁸ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2020-00665>

⁹ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2020-00509>

¹⁰ <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2018-00432>

- **WG on Hydroxymethyl furfural in bees**

See item 7.2.

- **WG on Mineral oil hydrocarbons in food**

The WG Chair informed the Panel that the WG is continuing to work on the assessment and that a new version of the draft opinion will be presented for discussion at the 119th CONTAM Panel plenary meeting.

- **WG on N-nitrosamines in food**

See Item 7.3

- **WG on Arsenic in food**

The WG Chair gave a presentation on the approach agreed within the WG for hazard characterisation of inorganic arsenic that will focus on human data. The CONTAM Panel discussed the WG proposal and agreed to it suggesting some refinements.

- **WG on Grayanotoxins in honey**

See Item 7.4.

- **WG on Acrylamide Genotoxicity**

The EFSA coordinator of the WG informed that the work to address this mandate had started.

8.3. EFSA

The CONTAM Team Leader informed the CONTAM Panel that a physical meeting of the CONTAM Panel could take place in March provided that evolution of the COVID 19 pandemic will permit it.

8.4. Scientific Committee and Working groups of interest to the CONTAM Panel

The Panel Chair reported the main points discussed at the 106th meeting of the EFSA Scientific Committee¹¹ that took place on 17-19 November 2021. In particular, the Scientific Committee adopted the guidance on scientific criteria for grouping chemicals for human risk assessment of combined exposure to multiple chemicals. The Chair of the CONTAM Panel presented to the Scientific Committee the proposal of the CONTAM panel to update the guidance on the margin of exposure approach for substances that are both genotoxic and carcinogenic. The Scientific Committee supported the proposal and the activity will be considered for the 2022 work plan of the Committee.

For the Working groups of interest for the CONTAM Panel, updates were provided on the activities of the WG on Genotoxicity, the WG on the update of the Benchmark Dose guidance, the WG on Uncertainty, WG on Copper and the WG on fluoride.

9. Any other business

Not applicable.

¹¹ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/it/events/event/106th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee>