

4-5 June 2025

09:00-17:30 / 09:00-12:45

MINUTES - Agreed on 19 June 2025

Location: Parma and Web-Conference

Attendees:

- Panel Members:

Ana Allende, Avelino Alvarez-Ordóñez, Valeria Bortolaia, Sara Bover-Cid, Alessandra De Cesare, Wietske Dohmen, Laurent Guillier, Lieve Herman, Liesbeth Jacxsens, Maarten Nauta, Lapo Mughini-Gras, Jakob Ottoson, Luisa Peixe, Fernando Perez-Rodriguez, Panagiotis Skandamis, Elisabetta Suffredini

- Hearing Experts¹:

Angela Bearth (items 8.4 and 9.1)

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Kris De Smet, Gunilla Eklund (EC DG SANTE)

- EFSA:

Simone Baldassa, Frank Boelaert, Sandra Correia, Maria Teresa Da Silva Felicio, Nadya Doyle, Nuria Ferrer, Beatriz Guerra, Michaela Hempen, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Angel Ortiz-Peláez, Hanne Rabbas, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Frank Verdonck (BIOHAW Unit)

Anthony Smith, Giorgia Zamariola (COM Unit) (items 8.4 and 9.1)

Nicole Bozzi Cionci (FEED Unit) (items 5.1, 6.1)

- Others:

None

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

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 Independence² and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management,³ 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.

¹ As defined in Article 34 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/en/keydocs/docs/expertselection.pdf>

² http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf

³ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf



4. Agreement of the minutes of the 177th Panel Plenary meeting held on 23-24 April 2025

The minutes of the 177th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 8 May 2025.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for adoption/endorsement

5.1 Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feeds as notified to EFSA. 22: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until March 2025 ([EFSA-Q-2023-00052](#))

Last WG meeting was held on 20 May 2025 in Parma. Forty-seven notifications were received between October 2024 and March 2025 (inclusive): 25 as feed additives, 7 as food enzymes, food additives and flavourings, 6 as novel foods, 8 as PPPs and 1 as food contact materials. From these, 41 were excluded from the current QPS evaluation for the following reasons: 16 were not evaluated because belong to taxonomic units excluded from the QPS evaluation (11 filamentous fungi, 4 *E. coli* and 1 *Streptomyces* spp.) and 25 belong to taxonomic units that already have a QPS status. Two of the other 6 notifications were already evaluated for a possible QPS status in previous Panel Statements: *Bacillus thuringiensis* and *Ensifer adhaerens*. The other 2 TUs were *Vibrio natriegens* (notified for the first time) and *Papiliotrema terrestris* (already assessed in 2022) which were assessed for a possible QPS status in this Panel Statement. Two TUs were also assessed for a possible QPS status but in response to an internal request: *Bacillus sonorensis* and *Corynebacterium stationis* (already assessed in 2022). *Lactobacillus paragasseri* was assessed as well because it was formerly included in *Lactobacillus gasseri*, a TU included in the QPS list. The statement was adopted by the BIOHAZ Panel.

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1 Scientific opinion on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feeds as notified to EFSA ([EFSA-Q-2023-00054](#))

Last WG meeting was held on 20 May 2025 in Parma. The next WG meeting is scheduled on 20 July. Specific sections of the draft opinion were shared with the BIOHAZ Panel for feedback. The deadline for adoption of this opinion is 31 December 2025.

6.2 Guidance on the submission of data for the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin ([EFSA-Q-2024-00020](#))

No WG meeting to discuss the revision of the guidance was held since last plenary. The WG dealing with the revision of the draft guidance on the characterisation and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain have addressed the three sub-questions under their remit (see agenda item 6.6). The report will be discussed at the next WG meeting with all comments received from interested parties together with EFSA responses and explanations how the comments were considered in the final Opinion. The draft opinion will be updated accordingly. A deadline extension of the self-task mandate from 30 June 2025 to 30 September 2025 has been requested.



6.3 Update of the scientific opinion 'Evaluation of the safety and efficacy of Listex™ P100 for reduction of pathogens on different ready-to-eat (RTE) food products' ([EFSA-Q-2024-00551](#))

The WG vice-Chair informed the Panel that no comments were received following the public consultation of the application⁴. The whole draft opinion was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel, including conclusions and recommendations. A discussion was held on the formulation of one additional data request. The last WG meeting was held on 15 May 2025. The next WG meeting will be held on 26 June 2025. It is expected that the adoption of the opinion will be anticipated to the 180th BIOHAZ plenary meeting.

6.4 Scientific opinion on the microbiological safety of ungulates meat intended to be frozen ([EFSA-Q-2024-00663](#)) and on frozen meat of ungulates: defrosting ([EFSA-Q-2024-00711](#))

The last WG meeting was held on 3 June and the next WG meeting will take place on 19 June afternoon. The WG coordinator updated the Panel on the discussions with the WG during the last meeting as well as on the ongoing activities and the European Commission (EC) agreed with the proposal to only focus on pork, beef and lamb when answering the ToRs of this mandate due to the limited data availability in other ungulate species. The deadline for delivery of the single scientific opinion is 31 December 2025.

6.5 Request for a scientific opinion on the risk of infection with highly pathogenic avian influenza virus affecting dairy cows in the United States of America ([EFSA-Q-2024-00712](#))

Two last WG meeting was held on 21-22 May 2025. Specific sections of the draft opinion were shared with the BIOHAZ Panel for feedback. The BIOHAZ Panel agreed with the proposed list of dairy products and colostrum-based products consumed in the EU that are relevant foodstuffs for the assessment. The data sources to estimate the levels of viable HPAI virus H5N1, Eurasian lineage goose/Guangdong clade 2.3.4.4b. genotype B3.13 in bulk milk and bulk colostrum were presented together with the relevant processing steps and associated parameters for the foodstuffs. The next WG meeting will be held by web-conference on 16-17 June 2025. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is 30 November 2025.

6.6 EFSA Guidance on the risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain ([EFSA-Q-2022-00249](#))

EFSA is finalising the replies to the comments received through the public consultation on the "Draft guidance on the characterisation and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain". A report will be prepared with all comments received from interested parties together with EFSA responses and explanations how the comments were considered in the final opinion. The guidance is being finalised and will be presented for possible adoption by the Scientific Committee in September.

6.7 Scientific opinion(s) on the current status of the occurrence and spread of carbapenemase-producing Enterobacterales in the food chain in the EU/EFTA

To generate new data (term of reference 2), a Monopole Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA) was signed with the EU and National Reference Laboratories on antimicrobial resistance (2024-2027). Studies will focus on isolation and characterization protocols, epidemiological investigations, in-depth genetic analyses of isolates, and genomic comparison of isolates from different sources. The WG will continue supervising the outcomes of the FPA-consortium,

⁴ <https://connect.efsa.europa.eu/RM/s/consultations/publicconsultation2/a0ITk000004AAi9/pc1414>



providing advice, and addressing any emerging issue related to the topic (e.g. drafting new scientific opinions). The duration of the activities of the whole mandate is up to the end of 2027, where an updated scientific opinion will be released.

7. Update on new mandates

EFSA has received some preliminary background information from the EC on a draft mandate for a scientific opinion related to the implementation of some aspects of the Regulation on packaging and packaging waste.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee, other Scientific Panels, EFSA and the European Commission

8.1 Scientific Committee

The Panel Chair reported to the Panel the main topics discussed within the 125th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC), that took place on 14 and 15 May 2025⁵, in particular: the first 2025 report of the horizon scanning activities, the discussion on the future work programme of the SC, an update on the work programme of the CONTAM and FEZ Panels, few ongoing cross-cutting SC activities, and the ongoing surveys related to the Commission evaluation of EFSA's performance. The Panel requested some information about the ongoing activity on a guidance on the effects of the microbiome, lead by the Chief Scientist Office. The Panel coordinator indicated that a presentation to the Panel could be organised on the topic, to raise awareness on the activities planes and assess possible cross-cutting issues of interest for the Panel.

8.2 European Commission

The Panel Chair and EFSA staff provided feedback to the Panel on the presentation delivered to the EC's Standing Committee on plants, animals, food and feed (PAFF) of 22 May 2025 on the set of BIOHAZ opinions on the microbiological hazards associated with the use of water in the post-harvest handling and processing operations of fresh and frozen fruits, vegetables and herbs (ffFVHs), and the related WaterManage4You online tool.

8.3 Update on EFSA Workshop on Burden of Zoonoses

EFSA staff introduced to the Panel the background and main objectives of the EFSA Framework Contract on Burden of Zoonoses in European Union and EEA/EFTA Countries 2025-2028 and the aims of a related workshop/webinar scheduled on 10 September 2025 (participation upon invitation). Panel members were asked to express an interest for their possible participation to the event.

8.4 EFSA Strategy on social science

EFSA Staff from the COM Unit and hearing expert Angela Bearth, member of the Scientific Committee, presented an overview on EFSA strategy and activities related to social sciences. In particular, the following topics were presented and discussed: the composition of the EFSA Social Science team and WG on Social research methods and advice; priorities within the EFSA Strategy 2027 in relation to social research, social science advice and social science expertise; examples of tools available to support and tailor EFSA communication activities and of past

⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/125th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee>



and future related activities; criteria for assessing the need to integrate social science aspects into EFSA mandates.

9. Other topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Exchange of views on food safety culture

The BIOHAZ Panel and the EC discussed a background document highlighting some aspects of food safety culture that could be part of a future mandate for a scientific opinion from the EC to EFSA, including for example a review on the topic, ways to monitor its implementation in the food sector and its effects on food safety. Considering the discussion, EC will further reflect on the issue and on the formulation of a mandate.

9.2 Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards

No discussion took place under this agenda item.

10. AOB

The Panel agreed on dates for 2026 plenary meetings, which will be made public in EFSA website in due time.

11. Preparatory meetings with risk assessment

Since the last plenary meeting, one preparatory meeting chaired by EFSA staff was held as follows:

11.1 Preparatory meeting on the QPS AMR Panel statement revision, 20 May 2025

Panel members attending: Valeria Bortolaia.

Discussion points: QPS AMR Panel statement revision.