

9-10 July 2025

09:00-13:00 / 09:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 30 July 2025

Location: 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:

None

○ European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

Sandrine Amsler, Kris De Smet, Gunilla Eklund, Martial Plantady, Charlotte Reemeijer (EC DG SANTE, participation to selected agenda items)

○ 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, Valentina Rizzi, Frank Verdonck (BIOHAW Unit)

Rosella Brozzi (FEED Unit) (items 6.1, 6.2), Montserrat Anguita (FEED Unit) (item 6.7)

○ 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 https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

³ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf



4. Agreement of the minutes of the 178th Panel Plenary meeting held on 4-5 June 2025

The minutes of the 178th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 19 June 2025.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for adoption/endorsement

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion

6.1 Statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feeds as notified to EFSA. 23: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until September 2025 ([EFSA-Q-2023-00053](#))

Last WG meeting was held on 2 July 2025. 26 notifications were received between April and June 2025 (inclusive): 18 as feed additives, 4 as food enzymes, food additives and flavourings, 2 as novel foods, none as PPPs and 2 as food contact materials. From these, 22 were excluded from the current QPS evaluation for the following reasons: 7 were not evaluated because belong to taxonomic units excluded from the QPS evaluation (3 filamentous fungi and 4 *E. coli*) and 15 belong to taxonomic units that already have a QPS status. Of the remaining 4 notifications, one - *Heyndrickxia faecalis* (previously *Weizmannia faecalis*) had already been evaluated for a possible QPS status in previous Panel Statements. The other 2 TUs included: *Nannochloropsis gaditana* (notified for the first time) and *Caldibacillus thermoamylovorans* (notified for the first time) will be assessed for a possible QPS status in this Panel Statement. An additional TU, *Aurantiochytrium acetophilum*, was included in response to an internal request. The statement will be presented for possible adoption in December 2025.

The BIOHAZ Panel was asked by the EFSA FEEDCO Unit to provide some clarifications in relation to the "Statement on how to interpret the QPS qualification on 'acquired antimicrobial resistance genes'", published in October 2023⁴, to help applicants in producing the necessary data. The QPS WG revised the document during the last QPS meeting, and the proposals were presented by the WG chair to the BIOHAZ Panel. The revised version was endorsed by the Panel.

6.2 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 2 July 2025 in Parma. The next WG meeting is scheduled on 29 September. 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.

6.3 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 draft guidance on the characterisation and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain (see agenda item 6.7) is being finalised and will be presented for possible adoption by the Scientific Committee on 24-25 September. Three sub-questions under their remit have been addressed. The public consultation report will be finalised with all comments received from interested parties together with EFSA responses and explanations of how the comments

⁴ <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2023.8323>



were considered in the final Opinion. The draft guidance will be updated accordingly and the sections under the remit of the BIOHAZ Panel will be presented for possible endorsement at the September BIOHAZ plenary meeting. A deadline extension of the self-task mandate from 30 June 2025 to 15 November 2025 has been approved.

6.4 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 last WG meeting was held on 26 June 2025. The draft opinion was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel for thorough reading, with focus on the comments received. The conclusions and recommendations were agreed. The panel was informed that the fourth additional data request was sent to the applicant. The new information from the applicant will be discussed at the next WG meeting on 18 July 2025. The draft opinion will be updated, and it is expected that the adoption of the opinion will be anticipated to the next (180th) BIOHAZ plenary meeting.

6.5 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 19 June 2025 and the next WG meeting will take place on 18 August afternoon. The WG coordinator presented the initial sections of the draft opinion (introduction, data and methodologies, assessment until 3.1.3.1.) and updated the Panel on the proposed approach to evaluate the overall uncertainty in our assessments. The Panel agreed with the framework for the appraisal of the different predictive models as well as for the uncertainty analysis. The deadline for delivery of the single scientific opinion is 31 December 2025.

6.6 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](#))

The last WG meeting was held on 16-17 June 2025. The WG Chair presented the section of the draft opinion under BIOHAZ remit for feedback. The BIOHAZ Panel agreed to use the outcome of the modelling approach ("bulk tank" model) to derive the titers of viable HPAI virus H5N1, Eurasian lineage goose/Guangdong clade 2.3.4.4b. genotype B3.13 in bulk milk (and bulk colostrum) without a further dilution of bulk milk from infected herds with bulk milk from non-infected herds. The overall log₁₀ reduction and concentration of viable virus in one unit of the final foodstuff will be calculated assuming this initial concentration of viable virus and considering the log₁₀ reductions achieved by the different processing steps. For the impact of thermal treatment, both the 'notional' thermal treatment (without considering the effect of heat-up and cool-down times on virus inactivation) and a realistic industrial profile will be considered, while for the other steps a range or distribution will be used. Given the limitations and uncertainties of the dose response (DR) models, it was agreed that it was not appropriate to select a DR model. Instead, one or two thresholds will need to be defined that will be used to calculate the number of servings per 1000 servings to contain a dose above the threshold. The formulation of the conclusions was discussed. The next WG meetings will be held on 16-17 July 2025 and 26 August 2025. At the next BIOHAZ plenary meeting, the opinion will be fully populated, apart from the outcome of the uncertainty analysis. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is 30 November 2025.



6.7 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.

6.8 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 (WP1, January-September 2025), epidemiological investigations (WP2, mid 2025 to end 2026), in-depth genetic analyses of isolates (WP3, mid 2025-end 2026), and genomic comparison of isolates from different sources (WP4, 2026-beginning 2027). The WG will continue supervising the outcomes of the FPA-consortium, 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 staff updated the Panel on recent preparatory discussions with EC on two draft mandates for scientific opinions: one related to food safety culture and the other 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 126th Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC), that took place on 2 and 3 July 2025⁵, in particular: the guidance on the use of read-across for chemical safety assessment in food and feed, an update on the work programme of the PLH and AHAW Panels, few ongoing cross-cutting SC activities, a review of actions put in place by the different Panels to reduce length and improve readability of scientific opinions, and EFSA activities on New Approach Methodologies (NAMs).

8.2 European Commission

EFSA staff provided a brief update on the expected requests for advice to be received from the European Commission in the second part of 2025 (see also agenda item 7) and in 2026.

⁵ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/126th-plenary-meeting-scientific-committee>



8.3 Update on the activities of the EFSA Scientific Network on Microbiological Risk Assessment

The Panel was briefly updated about the last meeting of the EFSA Scientific Network on Microbiological Risk Assessment, which took place on 1 and 2 July 2025⁶.

9. Other topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards

Panel member Laurent Guillier informed the Panel about a recent scientific opinion produced by ANSES in relation to tick-borne encephalitis.

10. AOB

EFSA staff updated the Panel on EFSA training opportunities for Panel members and on where to find related information. The Panel agreed on a revision of the date for the March 2026 plenary meeting, which will be scheduled on 12-13 March 2026.

⁶ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/26th-meeting-efsa-network-microbiological-risk-assessment>