

17-18 September 2025

09:00-17:15 / 09:00-13:00

MINUTES - Agreed on 2 October 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 (EC DG SANTE, participation to selected agenda items)

- EFSA:

Sandra Correia, Nadya Doyle, Nuria Ferrer, Beatriz Guerra, Ernesto Liebana, Winy Messens, Hanne Rabbas, valentina Rizzi, Eleonora Sarno, Pietro Stella, Frank Verdonck (BIOHAW Unit)

- 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 179th Panel Plenary meeting held on 9-10 July 2025

The minutes of the 179th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 30 July 2025.

5. Scientific outputs submitted for adoption/endorsement

5.1 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](#))

The draft guidance on decontamination has been updated and made aligned with the latest draft of the guidance on the characterisation and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain (see agenda item 6.5); the latter guidance will be presented for possible adoption by the Scientific Committee on 24-25 September. Three sub-questions under their remit have now been addressed and information has been incorporated into the draft guidance on decontamination. The sections of the draft guidance on decontamination of relevance to the BIOHAZ Panel were endorsed. Should any additional change be needed following to the discussion by the Scientific Committee of the guidance on the characterization and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain, the document will be resubmitted for new endorsement of the BIOHAZ Panel by written procedure or at the next plenary meeting. The public consultation report will be further finalised with all comments received from interested parties together with EFSA responses and explanations of how the comments were considered in the final Opinion. The current deadline for adoption of the opinion by the FCM Panel is 15 November 2025.

5.2 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 (BIOHAZ) was held on 18 July 2025. The draft opinion was presented in detail to the BIOHAZ Panel, with focus on the assessment of the new information from the applicant provided during the last additional data request. After discussion, the BIOHAZ Panel endorsed the draft opinion.

EC (DG SANTE) informed EFSA that the product falls under the definition of decontaminant and food additive and thus it requires the approval under both Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and Regulation (EC) No 1333/2008. Therefore, a submission of the application for the authorisation of Listex™ P100 as a food additive is expected, which will require a risk assessment of the product as food additive by the FAF Panel. As the BIOHAZ and FAF assessments are interlinked, it is appropriate to adopt both scientific opinions only when those assessments are finalised.

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, the next meeting is scheduled on 29 September 2025. A total of 40 notifications were received between April and August 2025 (inclusive): 25 as feed additives, 7 as food enzymes, food additives and flavourings, 6 as novel foods, none as PPPs and 2 as food contact materials. From these, 36 were not evaluated for the following reasons: 15 involved taxonomic units (TU) excluded from the QPS evaluation (7 filamentous



fungi and 8 *E. coli*) and 21 belong to TUs 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 ELS cycle is almost finished, missing to prepare the summaries for each TU. The statement will be presented for possible adoption in December 2025.

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, the next meeting is scheduled on 29 meeting. The overall draft opinion was presented and discussed by the Panel. It was explained that, concerning the possibility of reassessing bacteriophages within the QPS process, a consultation of a hearing expert will be held during the next WG meeting. A list of questions was prepared by the WG and shared in advance with this expert. The summaries of the 3-years cycle concerning the ELS, the new notifications and the QPS recommendations were included in the opinion. The deadline for adoption of this opinion is 31 December 2025.

6.3 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 8-9 September 2025 and the next WG meeting will take place on 9 October 2025. The WG Chair presented in detail the draft opinion, including preliminary results of the modelling exercise for some of the pathogens, spoilage and indicator bacteria, and preliminary structure and content of the conclusions for term of reference 1. The proposed approach to evaluate the reliability of the models used and the impact of overall uncertainty on conclusions was presented. The Panel made some suggestions for consideration by the WG in relation to further enhancement of the assessment of model reliability, reporting justifications on the assessment of the impact of overall uncertainty on conclusions, enhancing visual presentation of results, and shortening of overall conclusions. EC DG SANTE representative expressed support to the current draft opinion presented. The deadline for adoption of the scientific opinion is 31 December 2025.

6.4 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 meetings were held on 16-17 July 2025 and 26 August 2025. The WG Chair presented the whole section of the draft opinion under BIOHAZ remit, including the conclusions, apart from the uncertainty analysis. The BIOHAZ Panel agreed with the assessment of the impact of the different processing steps to derive the levels of viable HPAI H5N1 clade 2.3.4.4b genotype B3.13 in the selected foodstuffs. They also agreed to use the two critical thresholds (10^7 EID₅₀ and 10^{10} EID₅₀) to calculate the number of servings per 1000 servings to contain a dose above the threshold and to be used as a reference for classification and comparison across products. Also, the assessment of the measures along the food chain to reduce the levels of viable HPAIv were agreed. The conclusions were discussed and the planning of the uncertainty analysis was discussed. It was proposed to hold a meeting with the risk manager on the need, considering their decisions on risk management measures, to further add (based on expert judgement) the additional uncertainties (not captured in the model) in the expression of the conclusions. The next WG meeting will be held on 30 September, 1 and 2 October 2025 (morning only). At the next BIOHAZ plenary meeting, the



food safety part of the opinion will be presented for endorsement. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is 30 November 2025.

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

The QPS chair presented the main changes made in the draft guidance in sequence to the public consultation on the "Draft guidance on the characterisation and risk assessment of microorganisms used in the food chain". The document is ready to be presented to the Scientific Committee on 24-25 September 2025 for possible adoption.

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

No additional meeting of the WG has taken place since the last plenary. The WG will continue supervising the outcomes of the FPA-consortium, providing advice, and addressing any emerging issue related to the topic. 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

7.1 Request for a scientific opinion on the implementation of point 2 of Annex V of Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on Packaging and Packaging Waste ([EFSA-Q-2025-00456](#))

EFSA staff from the BIOHAW Unit informed the Panel that a new request for a scientific opinion on the implementation of point 2 of Annex V of Regulation (EU) 2025/40 on Packaging and Packaging Waste was received in EFSA from the European Commission on 18 October 2024. The background to the mandate and the terms of reference were presented and discussed with the Panel. The WG coordinator informed the Panel about the decision, taken in consultation with the BIOHAZ Panel Chair, that the mandate needs to be carried out by a new Working Group. After informing the Panel and in consultation with the BIOHAZ Panel Chair, Fernando Perez-Rodriguez was nominated Chair of the Working Group. The first meeting will take place on 7 October 2025. The deadline for delivery of the scientific opinion is end of November 2026.

7.2 Request for a scientific opinion on Food Safety Culture and its microbiological food safety impact in the EU ([EFSA-Q-2025-00553](#) and [EFSA-Q-2025-00554](#))

EFSA staff from the BIOHAW Unit informed the Panel that a new request for a scientific opinion on food safety culture and its microbiological food safety impact in the EU was received from the European Commission on 23 July 2025. The mandate will be presented in detail in one of the next plenary meetings.

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

8.1 Scientific Committee

No new Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee has taken place since the previous BIOHAZ Plenary.



8.2 European Commission

No discussion took place under this agenda item.

9. Other topics for information and/or discussion

9.1 Topics of scientific concern in the area of biological hazards

The Panel coordinator informed the Panel about internal EFSA discussions with EFSA colleagues from the KNOW Unit about possible signals of emerging risks collected from EFSA relevant Networks dealing with emerging risks. A presentation on the topic will follow in one of the next plenary meetings.

10. AOB

The Panel coordinator updated the Panel on some new EFSA training opportunities for Panel members and invited interested Panel members to apply.