

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON  
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN  
154 Panel Plenary meeting



7 – 9 October 2025  
13:30-18:00 / 9:00-18:00 / 9:00-13:00  
MINUTES - Agreed on 23 October 2025

**Location:** EFSA, Parma

**Attendees:**

o Panel Members:

Agneta Åkesson, Vasileios Bampidis, Margherita Bignami<sup>1</sup>, Laurent Bodin, James Kevin Chipman, Gisela Degen, Antonio Hernández-Jerez, Tim Hofer, Christer Hogstrand<sup>2,3</sup>, Helle Katrine Knutzen (Chair), Stefano Landi, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Kyriaki Machera<sup>1</sup>, Evangelia Ntzani, Isabelle P Oswald, Guido Rychen, Salomon Sand, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

o Hearing Experts<sup>4</sup>:

Ron Hoogenboom<sup>5</sup>

o European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

EC (DG-SANTE): Ivana Poustkova<sup>1</sup>, Veerle Vanheusden, Frans Verstraete<sup>1</sup>

o EFSA:

FEEDCO Unit-CONTAM Team: Lydia Alarcón Asensio, Maria Anastassiadou, Elena Bogensperger, Anna Christodoulidou, Chantra Eskes (CONTAM Team Leader), Mary Gilsenan (FEEDCO Head of Unit), Eirini Kouloura, Anita Radovnikovic, Luisa Ramos Bordajandi (Panel Coordinator), Giulia Rampazzo, Elena Rovesti, Hans Steinkellner

FEEDCO Unit-FEED Team: Matteo Innocenti

MESE Unit: Jose Cortinas Abrahantes, Marios Georgiadis, José Angel Gómez Ruiz, Olaf Mosbach-Schulz, Francesca Riolo, Rita de Sousa

CSO: Jean-Lou Dorne

iDATA Unit: Federica Finelli, Andrea Gissi

o Others:

Federico Cruciani, Anamarija Romac, Tuuli Tauriainen

o Applicants participating in a technical hearing:

Not applicable.

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

## 2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

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<sup>1</sup> Participated online for the whole Plenary meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Christer Hogstrand chaired the Panel during the discussion of item 6.1.

<sup>3</sup> Absent on Day 3.

<sup>4</sup> 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>

<sup>5</sup> Participated on Day 1.



### 3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence<sup>6</sup> and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management<sup>7</sup>, EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled 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 153<sup>rd</sup> Panel plenary meeting held on 8 and 11 September 2025, webconference

The minutes of the 153<sup>rd</sup> Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 29 September 2025.

### 5. Report on written procedure

None.

### 6. Scientific output(s) submitted for discussion or endorsement

#### 6.1 Draft Opinion on the update of the risk assessment on PCDD/Fs and DL-PCBs in food and feed on the basis of the new 2022 WHO TEF values (EFSA-Q-2024-00227)

The Chair of the WG on Dioxins and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented the draft Opinion on the update of the risk assessment of PCDD/Fs and DL-PCBs in food and feed for possible endorsement of selected sections and showed how previous comments have been addressed in sections presented at previous meetings. The CONTAM Panel discussed the sections on Consideration of critical effects, dose-response and derivation of a health-based guidance value, Risk characterisation, Uncertainty analysis, and Recommendations. The Panel agreed with the overall approach and provided comments that will be taken into account by the WG for the finalisation of the draft risk assessment.

#### 6.2 Draft Opinion on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of *Alternaria* toxins in feed and food (EFSA-Q-2024-00285)

The Vice-Chair of the WG *Alternaria* toxins in feed and food gave an overview of the status of the mandate and the EFSA Scientific Officer responsible for the exposure assessment presented the approach regarding occurrence in food. The Chair of the WG presented the approach for the hazard and risk characterisation of the *Alternaria* toxins for which the dietary exposure can be estimated. The CONTAM Panel agreed with the approaches proposed. In addition, the Panel introduced comments in the sections on Hazard identification, Occurrence data and Dietary exposure assessment for animals which were submitted for a first reading. These comments will be taken into account by the WG in the finalisation of these sections.

#### 6.3 Draft Opinion on the on the update of the risks assessment of emerging and novel BFRs in food (EFSA-Q-2018-00436)

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate\\_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf)



The Chair of the WG on BFRs in food and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented the draft Opinion on the update of the risk assessment for emerging and novel BFRs in food for discussion. The CONTAM Panel was informed about the Cheminformatics support that EFSA can provide to Panels and their WGs, with the specific example of the support provided for this draft Opinion. In addition, the Panel discussed the possibility to perform read-across to inform the genotoxicity potential of one of the BFRs under assessment. The Panel agreed with the preliminary proposal of the WG and provided comments that will be taken into account by the WG for the development of the draft risk assessment.

#### **6.4 Draft Opinion on the derivation of a HBGV for delta-8-tetrahydrocannabinol (Δ8-THC) and its occurrence in food (EFSA-Q-2024-00200)**

The Chair of the WG on Δ<sup>8</sup>-THC and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented the outcome of the Public Consultation of the draft Opinion, which took place between July and September 2025. The CONTAM Panel discussed the replies to the Public Consultation comments, and the modifications introduced in the draft Opinion. The Panel adopted the Opinion and thanked the WG members, EFSA staff and others involved in the preparation of this Opinion.

#### **6.5 Draft Opinion on the risk for public health due to the presence of matrine and oxymatrine in food (EFSA-2025-00323)**

The Chair of the WG on matrine and oxymatrine in food presented for possible approval the draft protocol for the Opinion on matrine and oxymatrine in food. The CONTAM Panel members went through the draft protocol, introduced some amendments and approved it. The draft protocol will be made available in OpenEFSA<sup>8</sup>.

#### **6.6 Draft Opinion on on the safety of conventionally smoked food (EFSA-Q-2024-00692)**

The Chair of the WG on Conventionally smoked foods and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer reported the progress of the draft Opinion on conventionally smoked foods. In particular the draft protocol was presented for approval. The CONTAM Panel went through the draft protocol, introduced some amendments and approved it. The approved draft protocol will be published for targeted consultation.

### **7. Other scientific topics for information/discussion**

#### **7.1 Extrapolation from a Reference Point based on experimental animal data to food-/non-food-producing animal species**

The EFSA CONTAM Team presented a tiered approach proposal to support extrapolation from a Reference Point based on experimental animal data to derive a Reference Point for food-/non-food-producing animals when data on the target animal specie(s) of interest are unavailable or the toxicological database of the species of interest is poor. The proposal is based on an approach used by the FEEDAP Panel for the assessment of feed additives<sup>9</sup>. The CONTAM Panel discussed and agreed to implement the proposed approach in the CONTAM Panel assessments. Some comments were made and the final proposal will be shared for Panel agreement by written procedure. Subsequently, the proposal will be shared with the Scientific Committee WG on Default values for consideration.

<sup>8</sup> <https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2025-00314>

<sup>9</sup> <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/j.efsa.2017.5021>



## 8. Feedbacks from the EC / Scientific Panel WGs / Scientific Committee / EFSA

### 8.1 European Commission

The European Commission representatives gave an update on the follow-up activities in relation to the Scientific Opinions of the CONTAM Panel. Several legislative measures are under discussion with the Member States as an outcome of the CONTAM Panel Scientific Opinions.

### 8.2 Scientific Panel Working Groups

- **WG on Lectins<sup>10</sup>**

The Chair of the WG and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer informed the CONTAM Panel about the comments received during the Public Consultation of the draft Opinion on the risk for human health related to the presence of plant lectins in food held from July to September 2025. The replies to the comments will be discussed at upcoming Plenary meetings.

- **WG Dioxins update<sup>11</sup>**

See item 6.1.

- **WG Enniatins and beauvericin<sup>12</sup>**

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel that the work on both opinions proceeded well, and that selected sections of the beauvericin draft Opinion will be sent for a first reading at upcoming Plenary meetings.

- **WG Alternaria<sup>13</sup>**

See item 6.2.

- **WG on BFRs in food<sup>14</sup>**

See item 6.3.

- **WG on Phomopsins<sup>15</sup>**

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel on the progress of the work and on the recent update of the Terms of Reference of the mandate, which requires, depending on the evidence available, a statement indicating the current state of the art about the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of phomopsins in feed and food.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-04/wg-lectins-in-food.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-06/wg-dioxins-update.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-10/wg-enniatins-food-feed\\_0.pdf](https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-10/wg-enniatins-food-feed_0.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-10/wg-alternaria-toxins-feed-food.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/wgs/chemical-contaminants/wg-BfRs.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-04/wg-phomopsins.pdf>



- **WG  $\Delta^8$ -THC<sup>16</sup>**

See item 6.4.

- **WG Semicarbazide<sup>17</sup>**

The Chair of the WG and responsible EFSA Scientific Officer informed the CONTAM Panel about the progress of the draft Opinion on the risk for human health related to the presence of semicarbazide in food. The draft Opinion is under development and will be presented at upcoming Plenary meetings.

- **WG Conventionally Smoked Foods<sup>18</sup>**

See item 6.6.

- **WG Thebaine and oripavine<sup>19</sup>**

The Chair of the WG and responsible EFSA Scientific Officer informed the CONTAM Panel about the progress of the draft Opinion on the risk for human health related to the presence of thebaine and oripavine in poppy seeds. The draft Opinion is under development and will be presented at upcoming Plenary meetings.

- **WG Matrine and oxymatrine<sup>20</sup>**

See item 6.5. The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel that the work on the draft Opinion has been progressing well, and that by end of October the occurrence data submitted to EFSA will be available to the WG to develop the exposure assessment section.

- **WG Capsaicin<sup>21</sup>**

The Chair of the WG and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer informed the CONTAM Panel about the progress in the study selection for the draft Opinion on the risk for human health related to the presence of capsaicin in food. The Panel discussed the eligibility criteria for the selection of relevant studies on human observations, and the comments will be taken into account by the WG.

- **WG OPFRs<sup>22</sup>**

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel about the first meeting of the WG on OPFRs in food and drinking water, where the Terms of Reference as provided by the EC were discussed. The WG proposed that the risk assessment will not cover only organophosphates flame retardants, but the broader group of organophosphorus flame retardants. The draft protocol will be presented for approval at upcoming Plenary meetings.

### **8.3 Scientific Committee including their Working Groups**

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-04/wg-delta8thc.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/minutes-wg-semicarbazide-food.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/wg-conventionally-smoked-foods.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-05/wg-thebaine-oripavine-minutes.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-06/wg-matrine-oxymatrine-in-food.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/wg-contam-capsaicin-in-foods-m.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-10/wg-contam-OPFRs-minutes.pdf>



The Chair of the Panel informed about the main topics discussed at the last Scientific Committee (SC) Plenary meetings, held on 25-26 September.

For the Working Groups of interest to the CONTAM Panel, updates were provided on the activities of the Cross-cutting WGs on Genotoxicity, SC WG Biomarkers of effects, SC WG BMD, SC WG Default values, SC WG Critical appraisal of evidence and SC WG Margin of exposure. The members were informed about the publication of the SC Guidance on the use of read-across for chemical safety assessment in food and feed<sup>23</sup>.

#### **8.4 EFSA**

The Panel members were informed about the Workshop on latest advancements of PFASs risk assessment organised by EFSA, which will take place on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The goal is to share knowledge and identify opportunities for collaboration/synergies on risk assessment. Risk management issues will not be addressed. The deadline for registration is 24 October 2025<sup>24</sup>.

The members were reminded about the upcoming dates of Plenary meetings and the dates for an ad-hoc meeting in November were confirmed.

### **9. AOB**

None.

### **10. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on 13-14 November (ad-hoc), via webconference.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/9586>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/workshop-latest-advancements-pfass-risk-assessment-register-now>