SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

156 Panel Plenary meeting



4 - 5 December 2025 9:00-17:30 / 9:00-17:30 MINUTES - Agreed on 18 December 2025

Location: webconference

Attendees:

o Panel Members:

Agneta Åkesson, Vasileios Bampidis, Margherita Bignami, Laurent Bodin, James Kevin Chipman¹, Gisela Degen, Antonio Hernández-Jerez, Tim Hofer, Christer Hogstrand, Helle Katrine Knutsen (Chair), Stefano Landi, Jean-Charles Leblanc, Kyriaki Machera, Evangelia Ntzani², Isabelle P. Oswald³, Guido Rychen, Salomon Sand, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

Hearing Experts⁴:

Not applicable

o European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

EC (DG-SANTE): Paolo Caricato, Patricia Herrero Sancho, Ivana Poustkova, Veerle Vanheusden, Frans Verstraete

o FFSA:

FEEDCO Unit-CONTAM Team: Maria Anastassiadou, 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, Sofie Schryvers, Hans Steinkellner

MESE Unit: José Angel Gómez Ruiz, Francesca Riolo

iDATA Unit: Andrea Gissi

o Others:

Lydia Alarcón Asensio, Federico Cruciani, Anamarija Romac, Tuuli Tauriainen

Applicants participating in a technical hearing:
Not applicable.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Elena Bogensperger (EFSA).

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Panel members

³ Absent on Day 1.

¹ Absent on Day 1 from 9:30-11:30 CET.

² Absent on Day 1.

⁴ 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



In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence⁵ and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management⁶, 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 155th Panel plenary meeting held on 13-14 November 2025, webconference

The minutes of the 155th Panel plenary meeting were agreed by written procedure on 27 November 2025.

5. Report on written procedure

None.

Scientific output(s) submitted for discussion or endorsement

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

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 and possible endorsement of selected sections. The CONTAM Panel went through the section on Data and Methodologies for the computational analysis, and the sections related to TBDPP, EBTEBPI, HBCYD, BEH-TEBP, EH-TBB and DBNPG, and provided comments. The Panel also discussed the approach for exposure assessment. In addition, written comments were also received in the sections related to the Interpretation of the Terms of Reference and Supporting information for the assessment. The Panel agreed with the approach proposed by the WG for the BFRs discussed, and the comments received will be taken into account by the WG for the development of the draft risk assessment.

6.2 Draft Opinion on the health risks related to the presence of capsaicin in food (EFSA-Q-2025-00304)

The Chair of the WG Capsaicin and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented for possible approval the draft protocol for the Opinion on Capsaicin in food. The CONTAM Panel members went through the draft protocol, introduced some amendments and approved it. The protocol will be made available in OpenEFSA⁷.

6.3 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 Chair and CONTAM Panel members of the WG *Alternaria* toxins in feed and food gave an overview of the status of the mandate and the outcome of the assessment of studies on toxicokinetics and toxicodynamics of *Alternaria* toxins. Sections on the Occurrence in food and feed and Animal dietary exposure were discussed and endorsed by the Panel, pending that the Panel comments are addressed by the WG. The Section on Hazard identification and characterisation was also presented and discussed during the meeting. The Panel provided

⁵ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf

⁶ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate publications/files/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-2024.pdf

⁷ https://open.efsa.europa.eu/questions/EFSA-Q-2025-00304



comments that will be taken into account by the WG for the development of the draft risk assessment.

6.4 Draft Opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of organophosphorus flame retardants in food and drinking water (EFSA-Q-2025-00369)

The planned discussion and possible approval of the draft protocol for this Opinion was postponed to the next Plenary meeting.

6.5 Draft Opinion on the presence of plant lectins in food (EFSA-Q-2024-00195)

The Chair of the WG Lectins and the responsible EFSA Scientific Officer presented the outcome of the Public Consultation of the draft Opinion, which took place between 24 July 2025 until 18 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.

The CONTAM Panel expressed its deep appreciation for the contribution from Patrick Mulder, who sadly passed away, to this Opinion and to other numerous CONTAM Panel Opinions on plant toxins. His excellent scientific contribution, collaborative spirit and kindness has been recognised and will be deeply missed.

6.6 Draft Opinion on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of beauvericin and enniatins in feed and food, as regards beauvericin (EFSA-Q-2025-00314)

The Chair of the WG on beauvericin and enniatins in feed and food presented selected sections of the draft Opinion for first reading. The CONTAM Panel discussed the sections on Chemistry, Analytical methods, Previous assessment, Toxicokinetics, Toxicity, Dose-response assessment for effects in Atlantic salmon and Derivation of Reference Points for animal health assessment. The Panel provided comments that will be taken into account by the WG to continue developing the draft risk assessment. The Chair of the WG noted that the current hazard assessment and its conclusions will be finalised once relevant research carried out within the Partnership for the Assessment of Risk from Chemicals (PARC) will be available.

6.7 Draft Opinion on the risks for human health related to the presence of semicarbazide (SEM) in food (EFSA-Q-2024-00581)

A presentation was given to the CONTAM Panel on the latest developments of the draft Opinion, informing about the legal background, the previous assessments, the toxicity and occurrence data available, the preliminary exposure assessment results and the issues under discussion by the WG. The draft Opinion will be presented for discussion in upcoming Plenary meetings.

7. Update on new mandates

7.1 Request for a scientific Opinion on the risks to public health related to the presence of organophosphorus flame retardants in food and drinking water (EFSA-Q-2025-00369)

An overview presentation was given to the CONTAM Panel on the Background and Terms of Reference of the mandate on the risk to public health related to the presence of organophosphorus



flame retardants in food and drinking water, including the composition of the WG and the agreed timelines.

7.2 Request for an updated scientific Opinion on the shucking of certain species of scallops contaminated with domoic acid with a view to the production of edible parts meeting the safety requirements foreseen in the Union legislation including new data from EU Members States (EFSA-Q-2025-00620)

An overview presentation was given to the CONTAM Panel on the Background and Terms of Reference of the mandate on the update of the scientific Opinion on the shucking of certain species of scallops contaminated with domoic acid, including the composition of the WG and the agreed timelines.

7.3 Request for a statement on the findings presented in the 2024 report on the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR scientific Opinion (EFSA-Q-2025-00670)

An overview presentation was given to the CONTAM Panel on the Background and Terms of Reference of the mandate for a statement on the findings presented in the 2024 report on the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR, including the composition of the WG and the agreed timelines.

7.4 Request from the European Parliament for a scientific Opinion on micro and nano plastics in food (EFSA-Q-2025-00702)

An overview presentation was given to the CONTAM Panel on the Background and Terms of Reference of the mandate received from the European Parliament on micro and nano plastics in food, including its acceptance letter, the proposed approach and the agreed timeline.

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 Lectins⁸

See item 6.5.

WG Dioxins update⁹

The EFSA Scientific Officer in charge of the WG coordination informed the CONTAM Panel that the public consultation of the draft Opinion was lunched on 27 November and will

⁸ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-04/wg-lectins-in-food.pdf

⁹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-06/wq-dioxins-update.pdf



remain open until 26 January¹⁰. A webinar will be held on 11 December to explain the draft conclusions and provide insights on the principles and methods applied for the draft risk assessment¹¹.

• WG Enniatins and beauvericin¹²

See item 6.6.

WG Alternaria¹³

See item 6.3.

WG on BFRs in food¹⁴

See item 6.1.

WG on Phomopsins¹⁵

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel on the progress of the work regarding the draft Statement on the current knowledge regarding the risks for human and animal health related to the presence of phomopsins in food and feed. The draft Statement is under development and will be presented at upcoming Plenary meetings.

WG Semicarbazide¹⁶

See item 6.7.

WG Conventionally Smoked Foods¹⁷

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel on the progress of the works, with specific focus on the selection of contaminants of interest and the drafting of the Opinion. EFSA's Scientific Officer in charge of the WG coordination informed the Panel of the ongoing target consultation of the protocol, which will close on 26th January 2026.

WG Thebaine and oripavine¹⁸

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.

WG Matrine and oxymatrine¹⁹

The Chair of the WG informed the CONTAM Panel that the work on the draft Opinion was progressing well, and that there are sufficient occurrence data submitted to EFSA available to carry out an exposure assessment.

¹⁰ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/news/have-your-say-dioxins-and-related-pcbs

https://events.efsa.europa.eu/event/ar/978/webinar-on-dioxins-in-food-and-feed

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-alternaria-toxins-feed-food.pdf

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

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

¹⁶ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/minutes-wg-semicarbazide-food.pdf

¹⁷ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/wg-conventionally-smoked-foods.pdf

¹⁸ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-05/wg-thebaine-oripavine-minutes.pdf

¹⁹ https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-06/wg-matrine-oxymatrine-in-food.pdf



WG Capsaicin²⁰

Se item 6.2.

WG OPFRs²¹

See item 6.4 and item 7.1.

8.3 Scientific Committee including their Working Groups

The Chair of the Panel informed about the main topics discussed at the last Scientific Committee (SC) Plenary meetings, held on 26-27 November.

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 Default values, SC WG Margin of exposure, SC WG BMD and SC WG Critical appraisal of evidence.

8.4 EFSA

The Panel members were informed that the presentations given at the Workshop on latest advancements of PFASs risk assessment organised by EFSA held on 17th November 2025 are available at the EFSA website²².

The members were also informed about a series of documents aiming at increasing consistency in the CONTAM Panel outputs, including a template for draft protocols.

The members were also informed about the recent evaluation of inorganic Arsenic and organic arsenic species by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA)²³.

The members were reminded about the upcoming dates of Plenary meetings in 2026.

9. AOB

None.

10. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 3-4 February, via webconference.

²⁰https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-08/wg-contam-capsaicin-in-foods-m.pdf

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

https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/workshop-latest-advancements-pfass-risk-assessment

https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/one-hundred-and-first-meeting-joint-fao-who-expert-committee-on-food-additives-(jecfa)