STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION GROUP ON FOOD CHEMICAL OCCURRENCE DATA

14th Meeting

26 November 2026

14:00-18:00

Agreed on January 2026

Location: EFSA – online

Attendees:

- **Discussion Group Members:**

ORGANISATION	NAME
European Food Coffee Federation	Giovanni Lamberti
Natural Food Colours Association	Fabienne Zeugin
Tea & Herbal Infusions Europe - THIE	Cordelia Kraft
Tea & Herbal Infusions Europe - THIE	Farshad La-Rostami
Food Supplements Europe	Patrick Coppens
FEDIOL - EU vegetable oil and protein meal association	Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou
FEDIOL - EU vegetable oil and protein meal association	Emma Sexton
ICGA-Europe	Christophe Lepretre
FRUCOM	Joao Pereira
UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe	Chris Bruyninckx
European Dairy Association	Fanny Courivaud
PROFEL	Sabina Mirauta
Spirits Europe	Mario Gregori
FoodDrinkEurope	Ricard Celorio
FoodDrinkEurope	Gianluca Colombo
FoodDrinkEurope	Luca Terzi
CAOBISCO	Eleonora Alquati
CAOBISCO	David Bravo
Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE)	Matteo Lazzari
Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE)	Kata Hejjas
Specialised Nutrition Europe (SNE)	Evangelia Mavromichali
EU Specialty Food Ingredients	Charlotte Bercovici
EUROMALT	Gianluca Nurra
CEEREAL European Cereal Breakfast Association	Martina Zurli
Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council	Francesca Ortolan
Cefic, the European Chemical Industry Council	Miguel Angel Prieto Arranz
AMFEP, Association of Manufacturers and Formulators of Enzyme Products	Lucie McMurtry
FEFAC	Arnaud Bouxin
Kellen	Elsa Troullier
Profel	Antoine Moreau

- **European Commission**
  Ivana Poustkova, Frans Verstraete, Mulow-Stollin Ulrike

- **EFSA:**
  IDATA Unit: ABBINANTE Fabrizio (Head of IDATA Unit), BOCCA Valentina, FABRILE Maria Pia, GUTIERREZ LINARES Alicia, IOANNIDOU Sofia, MARCHESE Emanuela, TRIACCHINI Giuseppe Antonio (Chair), ZORMPAS Alexios, FLAMINI Vittoria, MITOULA Vaia, BELLAVERE Elena; VERICAT FERRER Marta
  FIP Unit: TARD Alexandra;
  MESE Unit: FERREIRA DE SOUSA Rita Sofia, CAFARO Angelo;

1. Welcome, adoption of the agenda. Quick tour of self-presentation of participants and temporary observers

The Chair welcomed the StaDG Members participating online and all the EFSA attendees present in the room. A brief tour de table followed, during which each participant introduced themselves. The agenda for the 14th meeting was then adopted without modifications.

2. 2026 Harmonized Chemical Monitoring (ChemMon) data collection

Alexios Zormpas (iDATA Unit, EFSA) provided a comprehensive overview of the 2026 Harmonised Chemical Monitoring data collection under which analytical data for pesticides, veterinary medicinal products residues (VMPR), Food Additives and Food Flavourings, and contaminants are collected. Then, updates to the reporting guidance, catalogue management, reporting tools, and timelines were provided.

In detail, EFSA explained the annual review of the chemical monitoring (ChemMon) reporting guidance, generally published before the opening of ChemMon data collection, describing the new business rules for the data quality of transmitted data. EFSA also outlined the timeline for data collection between April and June.

An overview was given about the structure and the content of the guidance, remarking the different mandatory and optional data elements, the different combinations of codes - sampling programme (‘*progType*’), the programme legal reference (‘*progLegalRef*’), the sampling strategy (‘*sampStrategy*’)– for all different domains under the ChemMon. In this regard, EFSA provided at the end of presentation the list of updated business rules as Annex I.

In relation to the new requests for the harmonized terminology, EFSA described the update of the catalogues which major release and publication of the SSD2 Catalogues usually occurs at the end of January. EFSA invited all data providers to request new codes sending a request through the functional mailbox (data.collection@efsa.europa.eu) by the 20th of December.

EFSA listed and described all the necessary tools to the data submission providing all the relevant link in the presentation. The link for downloading the catalogue browser (https://github.com/openefsa/catalogue-browser/wiki/External-Users) and the related instruction

and information (https://github.com/openefsa/catalogue-browser/wiki) has been provided. In relation to the process of data transmission, EFSA reminded the use of the catalogue browser application by those data providers who have already a DCF (Data Collection Framework) account. EFSA pointed out the different roles applicable for the data transmission: data provider (DP), data viewer (DW) and data validator (DV). EFSA also suggested that the catalogues can be downloaded in Excel format via Zenodo and via Github repository which contains the latest versions of the catalogues in '.ecf' format; to be imported in the Catalogue Browser (https://github.com/openefsa/efsa-catalogues).

EFSA outlined the three-Excel based reporting tools for XML file creation structured in line with the SSD2 Guidance and Catalogues. It was described the simplified tool and all the mandatory data elements as the best choice for the industry data provider.

EFSA also invited the new data providers/Organisations to send a request for creating a new DCF user account for the ChemMon 2026 via the functional mailbox (data.collection@efsa.europa.eu) by the end of January 2026. EFSA elicited the participants to check the Teams channel and the notifications and supporting material that are shared during the data collection.

EFSA reminded to express the need of receiving training on the Chemical Monitoring Data collection (Contaminants, Food Additives, and Food Flavourings) and Food additives use levels via the excel file shared in the Teams Channel 'Knowledge exchange on data collection with Industry' by 31st December 2025. EFSA announced that the training will approximately take place on February. Finally, EFSA gave an overview on the timelines of the ChemMon Data Collection 2026, as follows:

- From April to June: Data Transmission;
- From July to August: Data Validation, Confirmation and Acceptance.

3. Reporting Contaminants Data to EFSA under the ChemMon 2026 Data Collection

Alexios Zormpas (iDATA Unit, EFSA) presented some reflections on reporting contaminants data to EFSA under ChemMon Data Collection 2025. It was reported that 77 data provider organisations, 17 reporting industry organisations, 60 reporting Member States organisations participated to the call for data. EFSA received a total of 3 million accepted results, remarking a slight increase of the data providers from industry compared to ChemMon Data Collection 2024.

In relation to the priority list of contaminants for ChemMon 2025, no data were transmitted to EFSA as regarding lectins (food), ammeline (food and feed) and ammelide (food and feed). Additionally, EFSA received a negligible volume of data linked to the matrix of drinking water remarking that this matrix is the category with highest percentage of measurable findings such as chlorates and lead. Therefore, EFSA encouraged participants to submit we data linked to drinking water.

EFSA presented the draft priority list for ChemMon 2026 including capsaicinoids, chlorate, delta-8-/delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, domoic acid, glycoalkaloids, hexane, melamine, ammelide, ammeline, cyanuric acid, organophosphate flame retardants, sterigmatocystin, isoflavones, copper, and micro/nanoplastic. For the upcoming data collection, the final priority list of contaminants will be approximately published in February 2026 and notified through teams.

EFSA acknowledged the efforts of data providers in submitting data.

Frans Verstraete (EC) requested to clarify if the SEM were submitted as Contaminants or VMPR. EFSA confirmed to have discussed data about SEM extracted only from contaminants data.

Christophe Lepretre (ICGA Europe) asked how the priority list is usually drafted, requesting which kind of data are expected to receive for micro/nanoplastic in absence of the validated methods of analysis and sampling for complex sample matrix.

EFSA replied that the information for priority list comes from FEEDCO after communication with European Commission. EFSA highlighted that micro/nanoplastic other information is not available given that the mandate is still on negoziation.

EC replied that a mandate will come because of the initiative of the European Parliament remarking it is still under finalisation. Also, EC commented that the method of analysis remains a major issue and that a data collection can help to have an overview of the existing data in terms of methods, and data comparability.

4. Data collection on food additives and food flavourings

Alicia Gutierrez Linares (iDATA Unit, EFSA) presented some reflections on the data collection for food additives and food flavourings (FAFF) outlining the 2025 Data collection, the first Pilot of the Scientific Annual Report, and the second pilot for the 2026 data collection.

EFSA described the 2025 data collection mainly based on two open calls for data: the general call for analytical and use level data in relation to a predefined list of food additives; the 2nd call for the monitoring programme (analytical data, use level, and presence data). EFSA remarked that also for the 2026 data collection two open calls will be launched.

The results for the 2025 Food Additives and Food Flavourings Data Collection were presented and the efforts of data provider in data transmission was recognized.

For the first pilot of the use level data collection, EFSA received 4 912 results for 16 Food Additives (FA) and 3 Food Flavourings (FF), from 18 organizations. The presence data was collected through the mandatory field 'presenceAdded'.

Regarding the monitoring programme, the results collected for the 1st pilot were 663 for different 5 substances (Green S, Tartrazine, Cochineal Red, Caffeine, and Pulegone) from 9 different organisations – Food Business Operators and Member States – covering the food legislative categories: 05- Confectionary, 07- Bakery wares, 14- Beverages and 17-Food Supplements.

The results for the analytical data for FAFF under ChemMon2025 were 164 287, considering 40 840 samples for 163 FA from 22 countries and 109 FF from 16 countries. EFSA showed a trend in data submission over the last 3 years. In detail, the amount of analytical data reported for specific substances (Green S, Tartrazine, Cochineal Red, Caffeine, and Pulegone) were 18 672 over 9 061 samples from 21 countries covering most of the food legislative categories.

For the first pilot, the scientific annual report will be published by the end of March 2026 giving an overview of the monitoring data collected by Member States and Food Business Operators, type of data and substances. Also, for the exposure assessment, 5 substances will be taken into consideration. The timelines from the data elaboration to EFSA journal publication were outlined, specifying that the data will be published as Annex in the annual scientific report.

In relation to the 2026 data collection, EFSA presented some changes compared to the previous data collection. EFSA announced that the new legal limit database for FAFF will be fully implemented, and a new data element 'Marketing date' will be added to check the compliance of the food product against the Legal Limit Database. EFSA recommended to report the use level in the food as consumed and invited the stakeholder's group to no use 'Food colours', 'Artificial food colours', 'Food additives other than flavours, colours and artificial sweeteners' as matCode.

The timelines for the FAFF data collection were clarified. For the 2nd pilot phase, the priority list was already shared covering two food additives, Butylated hydroxytoluene BHT (E 321) and Sorbic acid-sorbates (E 200-203), and three food flavourings, Coumarin (annex III), Hydrocyanic acid (annex III) and Theobromine (16.032). The general call is still to be decided with the EFSA Scientific Unit and the Panel. However, a putative date for the training was proposed in Februray 2026. Also, it was reminded that the update of the reporting tools with the different types of data model, and the update and publication of the reporting guidance will take place in January 2026 remarking that the time of consultation for ChemMon and use level.

In relation to the 2025 priority list for FAFF, Chris Bruyninckx (UNESDA) asked to clarify how the differences in the the food legislative categories reported for use level data (05- Confectionary, 07- Bakery wares, 14- Beverages and 17-Food Supplements) and analytical data (covering most of the food legislative categories) will be analysed and compared in the scientific report.

EFSA replied that the scientific annual report for FAFF will have a dedicated section for types of data and substances. EFSA commented that much more food legislative categories were covered in analytical data collection because no presence data and qualitative results have been reported.

Kata Hejjas (SNE) asked to clarify whether the presence of hydroxides and citrates in the priority list for the 2026 call for data is related to the revaluation of food for infants and young children below 16 weeks of age and the timelines.

EFSA clarified that the call for data will be published by the end of February by clarifying that the list is still on draft status. Also, EFSA replied that once the call for data is launched and the data is collected, it usually happens that the data will be used for the evaluation in the following year maximum. In addition, EFSA discussed the time that generally occurs between the data submission and the publication of a scientific opinion.

Fanny Courivaud (ESA) asked to clarify when the list of additives of the call 2026 will be finalized.

EFSA replied to have a more finalized version for FAFF and contaminants before the end of 2025 and to share it via Teams Channel.

5. Update on EFSA risk assessments

Alexandra Tard (Mese Unit, EFSA) presented the 2025 risk assessments performed with the data provided by the stakeholder. In the area of chemical contaminants, the data from industry are not the main sources but could be determining. EFSA showed 2 opinions published in 2025, on lead and on perchlorate in food.

Also, EFSA outlined 3 ongoing assessment on PCDD/Fs and DL-PCBs in food and feed, on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of Alternaria toxins in feed and food and on the safety of smoked meat and smoked meat products, smoked fish and smoked fishery products and smoked cheese and smoked dairy products following the use of conventional smoking processes).

Regarding the food additives area, most of the opinions published are based only on occurrence data from industry. There were 6 opinions published in 2025 on food additives re-evaluations or follow-up:

- Re-evaluation of pullulan (E 1204) as a food additive and new application for its extension of use;
- Follow-up of the re-evaluation of silver (E 174) as a food additive (no exposure extimates);
- Re-evaluation of the acesulfame K (E 950) as food additive;
- Re-evaluation of neotame (E 961) as a food additive;
- Follow-up of the re-evaluation of acetic, lactic, tartaric, mono- and diacetyltartaric, mixed acetic and tartaric acids esters of mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids (E 472 a,b,d,e,f);
- Re-evaluation of oxygen (E 948) and hydrogen ad food additives (E 949).

Six other opinions related to food additives applications were also adopted and published: for new proposed food additives (on pea fibre concentrate, on d-α-tocopheryl polyethylene glycol-1000 succinate (Vitamin E TPGS), on Jagua (genipin-glycin) blue) or on amendments of already authorised additives (on proposed amendment of the specifications of the food additive E960c(i) or E960c(ii) and proposed amendment of the conditions of use of the food additive sorbitan monostearate (E 491) in enzyme preparations).
Other outputs were delivered this year. The update of the guidance on the preparation of an application for authorisation of a food additive submitted under Regulation (EC) No 1331/2008 was adopted; the 2022 sulphites opinion was republished and a technical report with update of the dietary exposure to sulphites following the EC mandate related to alternative MPLs for sulphites.
Assessments are on-going for 13 opinions related to applications on food additives, for 14 opinions on food additives to be re-evaluated or followed up and for 9 sweeteners and 5 flavourings.

Rita Ferreira De Sousa (Mese Unit, EFSA) presented how to report data on food supplements to be diluted before consumption providing examples such as the powders, the effervescent tablet. The challenges encountered in data cleaning due to missing information were presented.

For the liquid food supplements, a new physical state was added and presented describing the case of the syrups. For other types of supplements, EFSA recommended in the case of drops to be consumed diluted and analysed undiluted, to describe the process of dilution. For the drops not to be diluted and consumed as such, it was suggested to use the physical state.

Recent facets which have been added to the physical state facet such as effervescent tablet, drops, the chewable tablet and the syrup type liquids were described. EFSA remarked that how to add and leave to add the F24 facet is still a topic under internal discussion and therefore ongoing.

The internal report on the harmonisation of dilution factors to be used in the assessment of dietary exposure was mentioned remarking the presence of some standard dilution factors which can be used, mostly derived from the product label instructions from the Mintel's Global New Product database mentioning the ongoing work on new version that it is intended to by delivered by the end of 2026.

Charlotte Bercovici (EU Specialty Food Ingredients) asked to clarify the food additives guidance, the transition period and the application.

EFSA clarified that the guidance on the preparation of an application for authorisation of a food additives will be published in January specifying that the experts will be allowed to use the new version of FAIM following the recommendation related to exposure assessment as in the new guidance.

Patrick Coppens (Food Supplements Europe) raised a concern in relation to the revised facet as putative solution for reporting data on food supplements. The expert proposed to consider taking

action at the level of the categorisation of food supplements in the catalogue browser to also prevent inaccurate exposure assessment. The Food Supplements Europe volunteered to provide examples on the different types of food supplements currently on the market. EFSA commented that the current categorisation of food supplements in the FoodEx2 catalogue will be kept as it affects multiple domains remarking that it is more feasible acting at facet level. EFSA welcomed proposals to further discuss and offered support in data coding and reporting to the expert.

6. Proactive raw data publication in Zenodo

Alicia Gutierrez Linares (iDATA Unit, EFSA) outlined its proactive approach for publishing chemical monitoring data, grounded in the General Principles derived from its Technical Report on publishing data from EU-coordinated monitoring programmes and surveys. The system involves making raw-level data available on the Zenodo platform while applying predefined data-reduction measures to safeguard confidential information. These measures include removing free-text fields, location-specific data, and personal or business-operator details. Certain identifiers, such as sample and laboratory IDs, are anonymised before publication to preserve analytical value without compromising confidentiality.

EFSA clarified that raw data are released only in conjunction with relevant EFSA outputs. Since 2019, this approach has been successfully implemented for pesticide residues, contaminants, and VMPR data provided by Member State authorities, proving stable, legally compliant, and efficient in reducing workloads linked to Public Access to Documents (PAD) requests. The first FA/FF data publication is anticipated in 2026, following the release of the FA/FF Annual Report.

EFSA also informed the stakeholders' group that, in October 2025, the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Regulation establishing the Common Data Platform (CDP) on chemicals. This platform will serve as a central EU-level repository integrating information from existing tools, including IPCHEM (Information Platform for Chemical Monitoring), to enhance transparency, accessibility, and regulatory efficiency. CDP is expected to contain broad chemicals-related datasets (e.g., physico-chemical properties, hazards, uses, exposures, emissions) and will be accessible to authorities and the public. In accordance with this new Regulation, EFSA will be required to transfer data from its Data Warehouse, including industry data collected through EFSA processes, to ECHA. Thus, such transfers will occur only with prior consent from data owners and after agreement on relevant data redaction.

Overall, there was no objection from any of the members of the Group on EFSA's proactive publication of Groups' data from all current and future chemical monitoring transmissions and associated data models.

7. Dietary exposure assessment tools at EFSA

Angelo Cafaro (Mese Unit, EFSA) provided an overview of the dietary exposure assessment tools used to evaluate potential health risks deriving from substances in food.

Two main approaches were described, as follows: the conservative assessments, which apply the worst-case assumptions (e.g., maximum residue levels, high consumption values) for quick, protective screening; the refined assessments, which use real-world data, processing factors, and

probabilistic modeling for more accurate estimates. Refined assessments can include processed food unlike conservative assessments.

The tools presented included Dietary Exposure, **DietEx,** for general dietary exposure, Rapid Assessment of Contaminant Exposure, **RACE,** for rapid contaminant exposure, Pesticide Residue Intake Model, **PRIMo,** for pesticide residues, Feed Additive Consumer Exposure, **FACE** for feed additives, Food Enzyme Intake Model, **FEIM** for food enzymes and Food Additives Intake Model, **FAIM** for food additives. Most tools are deterministic, but a probabilistic tool, namely Monte Carlo Risk Assessment, **MCRA**, is available via collaboration with the Dutch Institute for Food Safety and supports cumulative risk assessment for pesticide residues.

Tools differ in the type of consumption data used: some rely on EFSA's Food Consumption database (**RACE**, **DietEx**, **FEIM**, **FAIM**), while others use a processed model of the Food Consumption database called Raw Primary Commodities (RPC) model (**FACE** and **PRIMo 4**). The exposure type analysed varies by tool: **FACE** and **PRIMo 4** support both acute (short-term, high-intensity) and chronic (long-term, low-intensity) exposure, while others support chronic only. In addition, each tool presents specific features that define their use.

These tools use deterministic methods and rely on the **FoodEx2 classification system**. They compare exposure against safety thresholds like ADI (Acceptable Daily Intake) and ARfD (Acute Reference Dose) and they are available either on EFSA's Azure Analytics or the R4EU portals. **FACE** is currently available in MicroStrategy, a platform that EFSA plans to discontinue. **RACE** and **FAIM** have already migrated to R4EU in July 2025. In the same period, the consumption data for **RACE**, **FAIM**, and **FEIM** were updated.

A new harmonized tool, **REDEX**, is planned for 2027 to integrate multiple domains, such as those related to residue and veterinary products, and replace **FACE** and **PRIMo**. A public consultation of **REDEX** is planned for early (April) 2026.

Finally, EFSA also introduced a macro-enabled Excel file to streamline batches of input data transfers to **DietEx** via an API, particularly useful for flavouring exposure assessments. A piloting phase is being conducted together with EFFA and IOFI and the tool will be available to the public as an extension to **DietEx** in early 2026. The current **DietEx** will also receive updated consumption data before the end of 2025.

These developments aim to simplify access, harmonize tools, and reduce complexity. So far, EFSA has compiled an internal inventory of available tools, and future plans include implementing versioning to allow users to run different regulatory versions deployed over time.

8. Update on Rebuild project

Valentina Bocca (iDATA Unit, EFSA) provided an update on the ongoing Rebuild Data Framework (DF) project, aimed at modernising how data is ingested, managed, and analysed within EFSA, focusing on Work Package 2 (WP2).
The described WP2 foresees the development of a new data collection platform replacing the current systems (DCF, SAS, and MicroStrategy) to provide a modern and scalable system, to support different ways of working and to allow faster output generation.

The main tools and platforms being adopted in the project, including Azure Cloud, Databricks, and Power BI, and the new preliminary data ingestion process were introduced. The solution under development will enable data providers to interact with the system through multiple channels, including a user-friendly web portal, APIs, EFSA's own environment and tools, dashboards for analysis and insights.

The process of data submission introduces easier data manipulation, formalized acceptance steps, and faster data visualization. The new platform provides the possibility of correcting single records allowing direct data manipulation. Reports and dashboards will be promptly available in Power BI. Once the data is validated by the providers, the data will be released to EFSA which can provide scientific feedback to the stakeholders and highlight potential issues. Throughout the entire process, the user has access to visualization and consultation tools.

The next steps foresee the finalization in Q1-2026 and a pilot with 2 data collections through 2026, with the aim of having the system in place in 2027. The pilot will include a limited group of stakeholders between member states and a couple of industrial providers. The data providers involved are required to have an engagement of a maximum of 10/15 days. The participants will be encouraged to test the new system.

Participants have been invited to express their interest in joining the pilot by directly contacting EFSA and to test the new features, the performance, the usability of the new system and to provide feedback; after that EFSA will shortlist a couple of volunteers and will agree with them the exact timelines and modalities.

After the presentation, the group showed interest in participating in the pilot, with four members expressing interest: FEDIOL (Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou and Emma Sexton), EUROMALT (Gianluca Nurra), PROFEL (Antoine Moreau), and ICGA-europe (Christophe Lepretre). EFSA noted that if interest exceeds capacity, selection criteria will favour members that can provide different data types and volume.

9. Preliminary analysis of industry data submission simplification

Sofia Ioannidou (iDATA Unit, EFSA) presented a preliminary analysis on how to simplify the submission process for industry data. The presentation is a follow-up to the work done during the 12th meeting.

EFSA examined a case study based on raw data provided by the European commission and originating from an example stakeholder. The assessment focused on the data encoding requirements proposed by the simplified SSD2 tool, which consists of 47 data elements: 26 mandatory and 3 dependent mandatory, considering as target the domain of chemical contaminants occurrence. EFSA investigated which of the mandatory and dependent mandatory data elements can be predefined with default values or retrieved from the past 5 years. The analysis resulted in 14 predictable and 15 non-predictable data elements.

EFSA outlined different examples of predictable data elements, such as the Programme Legal Reference ('ProgLegalRef'), which can be filled with the default umbrella term provided by EFSA annual guidance, that in the case of Chemical Monitoring Recording Guidance (2025) is 'N129A': Regulation (EC) No 178/2002; then, the Programme type ('ProgType') that for industries can be pre-filled with the default value "Industry/private programme" (K012A), the Sampler ('Sampler'), that can be filled with either "Industry sampling" (CX01A) or "Official and Industry sampling" (CX03A), and the Evaluation of the result ('evalCode') that can be pre-filled with the default value "Result not evaluated" (J029A).

EFSA suggested that non-predictable data elements should form the minimum required entries provided by stakeholders. These data elements are the 'SampMatCode', the 'ParamCode', the

sampling date ('SampY', 'SampM' and 'SampD'), the 'anMethCode' and 'accredProc', at least one of the three data elements LOD, LOQ or VAL, depending on whether the result of the analysis is quantifiable, the 'ResUnit', the 'AnalysisY', and the information on the origin, sampling and laboratory countries ('OrigCountry', 'SampCountry', 'LabCountry').

Subsequently, EFSA provided examples on how inconsistent formats in unstructured data can lead to data loss: for example, using non-standard naming for the analytical methods.

Then, EFSA discussed the findings of data frequencies in the DWH regarding a few specific data elements. EFSA questioned whether the use of the code "Official (National) programme" in the 'ProgType' was intentional or due to misunderstanding of the data element. Similarly, EFSA asked if the frequent use of "confirmation" in the analytical method type reflected technical characteristics or a misunderstanding of the data element. EFSA proposed using "confirmation" when 'resVal' is provided, and 'resType' is "VAL", and "Screening" when 'resType' is LOQ or LOD. EFSA also highlighted the significant frequency of unknown country of origin and stressed the need for specification.

Data providers were asked whether there are impediments in retrieving information on the data. EFSA announced plans to organize a dedicated training course for industry data providers, develop specific video tutorials, intensify the support through ServiceNow, and amend the guidance for the simplified SSD2 tool with examples for industry data. EFSA also aims to conduct a more in-depth study, not limited to contaminants, and revisit the topic in the June 2026 meeting.

At the end of the presentation, Arnaud Bouxin (FEFAC) questioned the importance of the 'LabCountry' for exposure assessment. The same expert raised concerns on the relevance of reporting LOQ and/or LOD, noting that the EU Commission is now moving towards requesting only LOQ. EFSA clarified that only one variable among LOQ, LOD and 'resVAL' is mandatory depending on the data type reported and explained that the need for the "LabCountry" information will be assessed internally. To address the inconsistency identified in the results reported in the EFSA's case study, Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou representing FEDIOL explained their data collection workflow. The organization uses a simplified template which members complete and later is converted to EFSA standards. The member noted that the template often contains internal analytical method codes, which the organization must subsequently map to EFSA standards. The member noted that laboratory results often include values reported as symbol "<" a given quantity, which do not represent LOQ or LOD. They suggested this may occur due to limitations in distinguishing contaminants from interfering compounds. Also, the expert highlighted that laboratories often follow different preparatory steps for specific samples and asked whether such information is required by EFSA.

EFSA replied that the FoodEx2 facet may provide the necessary coding.

Chris Bruyninckx (UNESDA Soft Drinks Europe) agreed with Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou regarding the difficulties found in collecting data via templates between members of UNESDA.

Gianluca Nurra (EUROMALT) raised concerns about the current workflow for submitting data with the simplified tool, noting technical difficulties in exporting the XML file suggesting implementing an automated import function.

EFSA provided suggestions to avoid the loss of validation rules.

10. AOB (Report from the Stakeholders forum and possible follow up actions)

Fabrizio Abbinante (iDATA Unit, EFSA) presented feedback from the stakeholders' forum highlighting the need to renew the composition of the StaDG group, in particular by extending the invitation to additional data providers, and to involve more industry associations via collaborations

aimed at supporting data providers in the data-submission process. Furthermore, the possibility of organising annual events or dedicated sessions to provide information and training on data reporting to a wider range of data providers was discussed, with the aim of helping industry associations reach their members more effectively.

The request to EFSA was to minimize and improve the existing tools for data reporting, making future tools more effective and simpler, like merging Portalino with DCF (which is now in the plans). There was also a proposal to develop a 3rd version of SSD, possibly simplified. Usage of AI in support of data reporting was also suggested, in particular with the development of the new data catalogue. Many requests reached EFSA to simplify the catalogue browser because apparently it is too difficult to use the tool for several data providers.

During the stakeholder's forum, EFSA outlined ongoing activities, including the Rebuild project, the new data collection system, and updates on the chemical data platform developed by ECHA to share chemical data.

During the stakeholder's forum it was also discussed how can Industry associations work together with EFSA for providing support to data providers. In this perspective the European Dairy Association (EDA) proposed to collect and compile issues faced by data providers. EFSA positively welcomed the EDA's proposal by offering support to collaborate in this exercise. During the discussion regarding the presentation, Fanny Courivaud (EDA) on behalf of the stakeholders remarked on the importance of being involved in the revision and improvement of the tools. Therefore, EDA proposed to EFSA the launch consultation for collecting suggestions to be discussed during the StaDG meeting.

EFSA recommended using the Teams channel to send messages or emails that can be then assessed and addressed during the annual meeting. The group was invited to be as specific as they can in their comments on why and which elements create difficulties to be guided with specific assistance on possible errors generated.

In the next meeting, EFSA can discuss the specific questions raised and build an integrative manual of data provision or suggest a parametrization of information.

Fanny Courivaud (EDA) commented that specific feedback and issues have not been discussed because the problem for industries seems to be more structural: the system should consider the reality of trade association and the resulting trickle-down of the information between multiple organizational layers and the limitation caused by the need for credentials to access the catalogue browser. It seems that the ones that have access to the catalogue browsers are overloaded with requests. Another issue arises from the complexity of registering EFSA codes for providers with large product portfolios. The claim is that the tools are not designed for trade associations. The group was reminded of the ticketing system provided by EFSA. Different industrial associations may have different problems with EFSA tools, thus EFSA proposed launching a survey. The main issue remains in the scarce representation of data providers in the discussion group. The training in February 2026 seems to be the first opportunity.

Another issue that arose was that often laboratories do not generate data through standardized methods. The data flow is complex, and EFSA should find a way to make sure data generated is codified in a compatible way with European standards. EFSA was praised, particularly from Christophe Lepretre (ICGA-Europe), for its efforts in providing training sessions, consistency in reporting back when needed, consultation to stakeholders, and coordination.

11. Discussion

The Chair gave the floor for the open discussion, inviting experts to share their thoughts considering all the input coming from the different points of the agenda.

Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou (FEDIOL) raised a question on copper data collection and its representation. The issue arises because the copper is present in both pesticide and contaminates frameworks in the Param catalogue.

EFSA addressed this by showing the code for copper under the pesticide domain (RF-0102-001-PPP), and referring to Guidance 2026, which includes a business rule regarding copper data representation under pesticide (CHEMON 90a) requiring either facet F20 ("part consumed analysis") or F28 ("process") in the SampMatCode.

For contaminants, total copper is reportable under the code 'RF-00000168-CHE', and the description of the facets F20 and F28 is highly suggested to avoid the triggering of a warning. These facets indicate which part of the food was analysed and are important for risk assessment, as reminded by Frans Verstraete (EC), because the sample preparation for pesticides can differ from contaminants.

The topic was also discussed in the EURL NRL meeting regarding the copper data transmission to EFSA. There is no regulation for copper under contaminants' legislation. Nonetheless, ICP-MS methods for metals in food are used for regulated contaminants, and thus copper is automatically analysed as well.

Sabina Mirauta (PROFEL) raised a question on chlorates which were included in the contaminant call in 2023 and are now considered processing contaminants but still fall under the MRL regulation. The uncertainty on how to represent chlorate data prevented the submission, leading to few years of data pending. EFSA referred to the correct code to use for chlorates and reassured the group that additional information will be provided during the training sessions.

Finally, Despoina Angeliki Stavropoilou (FEDIOL) remarked the complexity of the data flow. EFSA should find a way to ensure that data is codified in a manner compatible with European standards, considering industrial data challenges.

12. Conclusions

EFSA thanked participants for the discussion, suggestions and commitment to improving data transmission.

EFSA agreed that the renewal of forums should be discussed. EFSA is free to invite additional people to the meetings. Nonetheless, a certain degree of formality should be maintained; therefore, EFSA cannot nominate members automatically but may accept temporary participants and colleagues replacing others.

A new call for expressions of interest will be launched, and EFSA will proceed with expanding the discussion group. A new meeting will be scheduled for May to gather feedback from the training sessions held in February, as well as to address other questions and comments. Next year's meeting will take place in November. An additional meeting, besides the one planned for May, may also be considered.