SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
Contamination in the Food Chain
4th Working Group meeting on Mercury

04th May 2026
09:00-15:30
MINUTES - Agreed on 12 May 2026

Location: Webconference

o Working Group Members:
Barbara Viviani; Vejdovszky Katharina; Thorhallur Halldorsson

Hearing Experts[1]:

Applicants participating in a technical hearing[2]:

Not Applicable

o European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
Not Applicable

EFSA:

FEEDCO Unit: Hans Steinkellner, Elena Zoe Bogensperger, Chantra Eskes

MESE Unit: Maria Bastaki, Irene Pilar Muñoz Guajardo

o Observers:

Not Applicable

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[3] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[4], EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the matters discussed in were identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of the meeting.

[1] As defined in Article 34 of the document "Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups": https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/paneloperation.pdf

[2] As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products": https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472

[3] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/independence-policy-2024.pdf
[4] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-11/decision-ed-on-competing-interest-management-25-11.pdf

IV. Scientific topic for discussion

a. Draft Statement on the findings presented in the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR (M-2025-00131)

The WG discussed the draft scientific statement, in particular the comments made by members of the CONTAM Panel, addressed the different sections of the statement focusing on the literature searches, for inorganic mercury and methylmercury. It was agreed to send the draft statement to the CONTAM Panel for endorsement at their next Plenary.

V. Next meeting

No further meetings are planned.

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

3rd Working Group meeting on Mercury

16 March 2026
09:00-15:00 CET
MINUTES - Agreed on 20 March 2026

Location: Webconference

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:
  Thorhallur Halldorsson, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

- Hearing Experts[1]:
  Not applicable

- Applicants participating in a technical hearing[2]:
  Not Applicable

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
  Veerle Vanheusden

- EFSA:
  FEEDCO Unit: Hans Steinkellner (chair), Elena Zoe Bogensperger,
  MESE Unit: Maria Bastaki, Irene Pilar Muñoz Guajardo

- Others:
  Not applicable

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Chantra Eskes.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[3] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[4], EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of the meeting.

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[2] As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products": https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472

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

IV. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

a. Draft Statement on the findings presented in the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR (M-2025-00131)

The WG members discussed the Interpretation of the Terms of Reference for this statement with the EC. Furthermore, the different sections concerning literature search and inorganic mercury were discussed with a specific focus on the methylmercury section. Tasks were allocated to the WG members. The statement was finalised and will be presented for endorsement on the next CONTAM Panel meeting (21-23 April 2026, Parma).

V. Any Other Business

None

VI. Next meeting

Tbd

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

2nd Working Group meeting on Mercury

23 and 27 February 2026
13:00-17:00 CET
MINUTES - Agreed on 06 March 2026

Location: Webconference

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:
  Thorhallur Halldorsson, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

- Hearing Experts[1]:
  Not applicable

- Applicants participating in a technical hearing[2]:
  Not Applicable

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
  Not applicable

- EFSA:
  FEEDCO Unit: Hans Steinkellner (chair), Elena Zoe Bogensperger, Chantra Eskes
  MESE Unit: Maria Bastaki, Irene Pilar Muñoz Guajardo

- Others:
  Not applicable

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies were received from Chantra Eskes.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[3] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[4], EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of the meeting.

[1] As defined in Article 34 of the document "Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups": https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/paneloperation.pdf

[2] As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products": https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472

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

IV. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

a. **Draft *Statement on the findings presented in the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR* (M-2025-00131)**

The WG members discussed the Interpretation of the Terms of Reference for this statement and the different sections concerning literature search and evidence on inorganic mercury and methylmercury. Tasks were allocated to the WG members.

V. Any Other Business

None

VI. Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on the 16 of March 2026, online.

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN

1st Working Group meeting on Mercury

08 January 2026
09:00-13:00 CET
MINUTES - Agreed on 16 January 2026

Location: Webconference

Attendees:

- Working Group Members:
  Thorhallur Halldorsson, Katharina Vejdovszky, Barbara Viviani

- Hearing Experts[1]:
  Not applicable

- Applicants participating in a technical hearing[2]:
  Not Applicable

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:
  Veerle Vanheudsen (DG-SANTE)

- EFSA:
  FEEDCO Unit: Hans Steinkellner (chair), Elena Zoe Bogensperger, Chantra Eskes
  MESE Unit: Maria Bastaki, Irene Pilar Muñoz Guajardo

- Others:
  Not applicable

I. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants.

II. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

III. Declarations of Interest of Working Groups members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[3] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[4], EFSA screened the Annual Declarations of Interest filled out by the Working Group members invited to the present meeting. No conflicts of interest related to the issues discussed in have been identified during the screening process, and no interests were declared orally by the Working Group members at the beginning of the meeting.

[1] As defined in Article 34 of the document "Implementing Rule of the Management Board of the European Food Safety Authority laying down the rules on the selection, appointment and operations of the Scientific Committee, Scientific Panels and of their Working Groups": https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/paneloperation.pdf

[2] As defined in the "EFSA's Catalogue of support initiatives during the life cycle of applications for regulated products": https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.2903/sp.efsa.2021.EN-6472

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

IV. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

a. Draft *Statement on the findings presented in the Toxicological Profile for Mercury issued by the US ATSDR* (M-2025-00131)

The WG members discussed the Terms of Reference for this statement with the representative from the European Commission. The available literature potentially relevant for the mandate was discussed. Afterwards, the draft structure and content of the statement were discussed, and tasks were allocated to the WG members.

V. Any Other Business

None

VI. Next meeting

To be determined.