European Food Safety Authority

Biological Hazards and Contaminants Unit (BIOCONTAM UNIT)

Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards
Minutes of the 92nd Plenary meeting
Held on 22-23 October, 2014, Madrid (Spain)
(Agreed on 27 11 2014)

Participants

- **Panel Members**

  Andreoletti Olivier, Baggesen Dorte Lau, Bolton Declan, Butaye Patrick, Cook Paul, Davies Robert, Fernandez-Escamez Pablo S., Griffin John, Hald Tine (apologies), Havelaar Arie Hendrik, Koutsoumanis Konstantinos, Lindqvist Roland, McLauchlin James, Nesbakken Truls, Prieto Miguel, Ricci Antonia, Ru Giuseppe, Sanaa Moez, Simmons Marion, Sofos John (apologies), and Threlfall John.

- **European Commission and/or Member States representatives:**
  - Klaus Kostenzer, Marina Marini (DG-SANCO[1]) (for item 8.2.3.2)

- **EFSA:**
  - BIOCONTAM Unit: Liebana Ernesto, Messens Winy, Correia Sandra, Da Silva Felicio Maria Teresa, Hempen Michaela, Romero-Barrios Pablo (Scientific staff), Danica Grahek-Ogden (Guest scientist)

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants. Danica Grahek-Ogden was invited to present herself.

Apologies were received from T. Hald and J. Sofos.

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Committee/Scientific Panel/ Members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision-Making Processes[2] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest[3], EFSA

[1] Participated via web conference
[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencepolicy.pdf

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screened the Annual Declarations of Interest and the Specific Declarations of Interest filled in by the Scientific Panel Members invited for the present meeting. No Conflicts of Interest related to the issues discussed in this meeting have been identified during the screening process or at the Oral Declaration of Interest at the beginning of this meeting.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 91st Plenary meeting held on 10-11 September 2014, Parma, Italy

The minutes of the 91st Plenary meeting held on 10-11 September 2014 were agreed by written procedure on 16 October 2014[4].

5. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion (thorough reading)

5.1 Scientific opinion on the risk posed by pathogens in food of non animal origin. Part 2 (other): *Salmonella*, *Yersinia*, *Shigella* and Norovirus in bulb and stem vegetables and carrots[5]

The last WG meeting took place on 26 September 2014 in Parma. The Chair of the WG presented the draft opinion and comments received from the Panel will be discussed at the next WG meeting on 24 October 2014 in Murcia (Spain). The deadline to deliver the opinion is end of December 2014. The draft will be presented to the Panel in December for possible adoption.

5.2 Scientific opinion on the development of a risk ranking toolbox for EFSA BIOHAZ Panel[6]

The last WG meeting took place on 1 October 2014 via webconference. The draft opinion was reviewed by the Panel and comments were noted by the Chair and WG members. The next WG meeting will be held on 18 November 2014 as a webconference. The deadline for adoption of the opinion is end December 2014. The draft will be presented to the Panel in December for possible adoption.

5.3 Scientific opinion on the public health risks related to the consumption of raw drinking milk[7]

The 7th WG meeting took place on 10 October 2014 by webconference. The Chair of the WG presented the changes resulting from that meeting and the progress made. The last meeting is on 4-5 November 2014 in Parma. The deadline to deliver the opinion is end of December 2014. The draft will be presented to the Panel in December for possible adoption.

5.4 Panel statement on the update of the list of QPS-recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA 1: Suitability of taxonomic units notified to EFSA until July 2014[8]

The third WG meeting took place on 21 October 2014 in Madrid. The experts further assessed the possible safety concerns related to the microorganisms notified by the EFSA Units. The first Panel statement draft was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel. Another meeting by webconference will be held on 12-13 November 2014. The draft will be presented to the Panel in December for possible adoption.

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[3] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/keydocs/docs/independencerules2014.pdf
[4] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/140910-m.pdf
[5] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00176
[6] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-00014
[7] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2013-01026
[8] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00611

6. Scientific outputs submitted for discussion (progress report)

6.1 Scientific opinion on the public health risks associated with Enteroaggregative *Escherichia coli* (EAggEC)[9]

The preparatory work in the development of the opinion and the formation of an *ad hoc* WG has been completed and the first meeting of the WG is scheduled to be held on 11 November 2014 in Parma. The deadline to deliver the opinion is end of December 2015.

6.2 Scientific opinion on the treatment by successive filtration as an alternative method for the HTST pasteurization of bovine colostrum (category 3 animal by-product)[10]

The request for a scientific opinion for the evaluation of a new sanitizing treatment method of bovine colostrum by-products category 3 from the French Competent Authority was officially received by EFSA. An *ad hoc* WG will be established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the opinion. The approach to be taken for the follow up of the work and the current status of the application was explained to the Panel. The application is currently being checked for completeness. The deadline to deliver the opinion is 6 months following receipt of a complete application.

6.3 Scientific opinion on the update of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA[11]

The third WG meeting took place on 21 October 2014 in Madrid. The protocol and approach for the extensive literature search (ELS) was further discussed and improved by the Assessment and methodological support (AMU) Unit, with the support from the WG experts. It aims collecting new scientific information for the review of the current list of QPS microorganisms and their qualifications. The deadline for adoption of the opinion is end of December 2016.

7. New Mandates

A new request for technical assistance for an update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus (EBOV) via the food chain was received in EFSA from the European Commission. It is discussed under point 8.2.3.2.

8. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/the Scientific Panel, EFSA, the European Commission

8.1 Scientific Committee and/or Scientific Panel(s)

The chair of the BIOHAZ Panel highlighted the main items discussed in the 69th plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee held on 16-17 September 2014 in Parma. In particular it was reminded that that the final draft external report on “Critical review of methodology and application of risk ranking for prioritisation of food and feed related issues, on the basis of the size of anticipated health impact” was shared with the BIOHAZ panel for comments by 31 October. The Panel was informed that the *ad hoc* WG on production and consumption of insects as food and feed is being formed and that a risk assessment of multiple stressor on bees will be conducted. The scoping paper on methodological approaches in EFSA was mentioned. The minutes of that meeting will be published on the EFSA website[12].

The next Scientific Committee meeting will take place on 11-12 November 2014 in Parma.

[9] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00536
[10] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00703
[11] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00189
[12] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/140708.htm

8.2 Working Groups

8.2.1. Standing Working Group (SWG) on Emerging Risks

An update on the SWG was presented. The SWG is developing strategies to improve the collaboration on identifying emerging risks with EFSA's Panels. The draft report on the identification of emerging risks is due in June 2015. The next meeting is on 8 December 2014 in Parma.

8.2.2. Working Group on Uncertainty in Risk Assessment

A brief update on progress was provided. The next meeting will take place on 29 October 2014.

8.2.3. Other Working Groups (Art. 31)

8.2.3.1 Scientific report on the evaluation of the temperature to be applied to pre-packaged fishery products at retail level (Art. 31)[13]

The first WG meeting was held on 7 October 2014 as a webconference. The next meeting will take place on 2 December 2014. The deadline for the report is under negotiation and foreseen for June 2015.

8.2.3.2 Update on the risk of transmission of Ebola Virus (EBOV) via the food chain[14]

A new request for scientific and technical assistance was received in EFSA from the European Commission and it was allocated to the BIOCONTAM Unit to address the terms of reference 1 to 3. An *ad hoc* EFSA WG was established to help with the preparatory work in the development of the scientific report of EFSA. Winy Messens (BIOCONTAM Staff member) is the Chair for this WG. The report was presented to the BIOHAZ Panel and after a thorough discussion it was endorsed by the BIOHAZ Panel. The deadline is end of October 2014. Terms of reference 4 will be addressed by the Unit for Animal and Plant Health (ALPHA Unit) and will be delivered in a separate report later.

8.3 EFSA

8.3.1. Present status of current outsourcing activities of the BIOHAZ Team

The present status of the three ongoing outsourced activities on "Closing gaps for performing a risk assessment on *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat (RTE) foods" was presented.

The first activity (EFSA's framework contract on Conducting Systematic Review or part(s) of Systematic Review for EFSA in various areas of EFSA) concerns a systematic review on *L. monocytogenes* in a wide range of RTE foods. This activity will started in November 2014 and runs until July 2015.

The second activity (open call) concerns a quantitative risk characterization on *L. monocytogenes* in RTE foods; starting from the retail stage. This activity started in October 2014 and runs until April 2016.

The third activity concerns the comparison of isolates from different compartments along the food chain, and in humans using whole genome sequencing (WGS) analysis [open call for tenders]. This activity has started in October 2014 and runs until October 2016.

8.4 European Commission

Nothing to report.

[13] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00528
[14] http://registerofquestions.efsa.europa.eu/roqFrontend/questionLoader?question=EFSA-Q-2014-00705

9. BIOHAZ Networks

The last meeting of the BSE-TSE Network took place in Parma on 7-8 October 2014. A short briefing of that meeting was provided to the BIOHAZ Panel. The minutes can be found on the EFSA website[15]. The presentations will be made available to the Panel members.

The next meeting of the Network for Microbiological Risk Assessment will be held in Parma on 25-26 November 2014. The agenda of that meeting is being finalised.

10. Other scientific topics for information

The draft summary report of EFSA's Scientific Colloquium N°20 "Whole Genome Sequencing of food-borne pathogens for public health protection"[16] that took place in Parma on 16-17 June 2014 has been shared with all participants in the Colloquium for comments by 23 October 2014.

11. Any Other Business

11.1 Briefing note on methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

The BIOHAZ Panel discussed the briefing note on methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), and decided that there is at present no need to update the previous BIOHAZ opinion on MRSA[17]. This is based on the epidemiology of human infections by livestock-associated (LA)-MRSA in Europe, which is largely dominated by exposure to farm animals or their environments, and the advice related to food remains valid. A point was made that several research projects are starting in Denmark concerning spread to humans of MRSA from pig herds and their close environment, and when these are completed new data will be available.

11.2 New Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest

The BIOHAZ Panel members were informed about the new Decision of the Executive Director on Declarations of Interest, highlighting the most important changes. The ADoI needs to be updated by 1 December 2014.

[15] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/141007.htm
[16] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/events/event/140616.htm
[17] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/993.htm