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## Advisory Forum

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<b>Title :</b>	<b>Draft proposal for Terms of Reference: Harmonisation of chemical occurrence data collection in food and feed</b>		
<b>Submitted by :</b>	EFSA Secretariat		
<b>Document for :</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b>	
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# **HARMONISATION OF CHEMICAL OCCURRENCE DATA COLLECTION IN FOOD AND FEED**

Exposure assessment is a key step in the risk assessment process central to EFSA's activities. Typical exposure assessments consist of combining data on the occurrence of a chemical substance or biological agent in foods consumed across the European Union with data on the consumption of the relevant foods by the general population or subpopulations of specific interest (e.g. infants, adults, pregnant women, and immune compromised people).

In developing scientific opinions, EFSA undertakes reviews of existing information and often has a need to collect new occurrence data for specific chemicals for the exposure assessment from Member States. Chemical data collections, e.g. for a contaminant or food additive have in the past been undertaken in an ad hoc manner, that is when a need arose a request for information was issued either directly by EFSA to the Member States or through the European Commission. Member States often reacted promptly but the lack of central coordination and the sheer number of requests can easily overwhelm the system resulting in incomplete responses.

The quality of the exposure assessment depends highly on the quality of the data input and the methodologies used to assess the exposure. A lack of information on the occurrence of a substance in a certain food or on the consumption of that food, as well as a lack of representative data for a certain country (e.g. occurrence data) or a certain subpopulation (e.g. infants, elderly) can hamper the quality of the exposure assessment.

## **Aim of Activity**

To form a network of chemical occurrence Database Managers with a member from each Member State that will coordinate and facilitate data collections for the occurrence of chemicals in food, beverages and feed.

## **Terms of Reference**

- To coordinate issues covering collection of chemical occurrence data in food, feed and beverages and act as a Member State point of contact
- To assist in identifying available resources in each Member State in relation to each specific question
- To coordinate laboratory issues in relation to analytical procedures
- To agree on reporting and data submission formats
- To initiate and oversee data collections