FOOD INGREDIENTS AND PACKAGING UNIT

SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON FOOD ADDITIVES AND FLAVOURINGS (FAF)

MINUTES OF THE 18TH PLENARY MEETING

Held on 15-16 December 2020
Online meeting

09:00-17:30 on 15th December 2020
09:00-17:30 on 16th December 2020

(Agreed by written procedure on 15 January 2021)

Participants

- Panel Members:

  Gabriele Aquilina, Laurence Castle, Karl-Heinz Engel, Paul Fowler, Maria José Frutos Fernandez, Peter Fürst, Ursula Gundert-Remy, Rainer Gürtler, Trine Husøy, Melania Manco, Wim Mennes, Peter Moldeus, Sabina Passamonti, Romina Shah[1], Dina (Ine) Waalkens-Berendsen, Detlef Wölfle, Matthew Wright and Maged Younes

- European Commission and/or Member States representatives:

  DG SANTE (Health and Food Safety), E2 Food processing technologies and novel foods: Guillermo Cardon, Bruno Gautrais, Milada Schulzova and Jiri Sochor

- EFSA:

  FIP Unit: Claudia Roncancio Peña, Stefania Barmaz, Ana Campos Fernandes, Maria Carfi, Consuelo Civitella, Esraa Elewa, Galvin Ndip Eyong, Alessandra Giarola, Federica Lodi, Carla Martino, Ana Maria Rincon, Camilla Smeraldi, Alexandra Tard and Giorgia Vianello

  TS Unit: Claudia Paoletti

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

The Chair welcomed the participants in the meeting. No apologies were received for the whole length of the meeting.

[1] Participated on 15 December PM and 16 December PM

2. Adoption of agenda

The agenda was adopted without changes.

3. Declarations of Interest of Scientific Panel members

In accordance with EFSA's Policy on Independence[2] and the Decision of the Executive Director on Competing Interest Management[3], 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 this meeting have been identified during the screening process.

4. Agreement of the minutes of the 17th Plenary meeting held on 24-25 November 2020, as online meeting

The minutes of the 17th Plenary meeting held on 24-25 November 2020 were agreed by written procedure on 14 December 2020[4].

5. Report on written procedures since 17th Plenary meeting

No scientific outputs were adopted by written procedure since the last plenary meeting.

6. Scientific topic(s) for discussion

FLAVOURINGS

6.1. FGE.13Rev3 (EFSA-Q-2014-00421; EFSA-Q-2014-00422)

The draft opinion on FGE.13 Rev3 was presented for the first time to the members of the Panel together with the main points for discussion. This scientific opinion is closely related to FGE.67 Rev3 adopted by the Panel at its previous plenary meeting. The current revision covers a total of 26 substances: 24 substances already evaluated in previous revisions plus the evaluation of two substances [FL-no:13.125 and 13.162] based on new data available for structurally related substances 2-acetylfuran [FL-no:13.054] and 2-pentylfuran [FL-no:13.059] from FGE.67Rev3.

The Panel discussed the different parts of the assessment and unanimously adopted the opinion, subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the meeting.

The full opinion will be available on the Authority's webpage.

[2] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/policy_independence.pdf
[3] http://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/corporate_publications/files/competing_interest_management_17.pdf
[4] https://www.efsa.europa.eu/sites/default/files/event/2020/17th-plenary-meeting-faf-panel.pdf

6.2. Guidance on smoke flavourings (EFSA-Q-2019-00687): feedback from public consultation and technical hearing with interested parties

Further to the discussion held at the previous plenary meeting, advice from the Panel was sought with respect to the comments received during the public consultation on the draft guidance, particularly with respect to the data requirements for renewal applications of smoke flavouring primary products. The major concerns expressed by interested parties during the public consultation was related to the timing issue for the completion of the studies required for renewals before the expiry of the current authorisations for smoke flavourings in combination with the legal requirement for dossier submission to occur by 30 June 2022, based on Regulation (EC) No 2065/2003. The Panel discussed several alternative options for the toxicity data requirements for renewals elaborated by the Working Group, together with pros and cons for each option.
Further to the advice received from the Panel at the current plenary, the draft guidance will be further elaborated by the Working Group and will be tabled for discussion and possible adoption at the next plenary meeting.

FOOD ADDITIVES

6.3. Re-evaluation of pectin (E 440i) and amidated pectin (E 440ii) as a food additive in foods for infants below 16 weeks of age (EFSA-Q-2018-00098)

The draft opinion on the re-evaluation of pectin (E 440i) and amidated pectin (E 440ii) as a food additive in foods for infants below 16 weeks of age was presented to the members of the Panel, together with the main points for discussion.

The Panel discussed the different parts of the assessment and unanimously adopted the opinion, subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the meeting.

The full opinion will be available on the Authority's webpage.

6.4. Assessment of titanium dioxide (E 171) as a food additive – progress update (EFSA-Q-2020-00262)

Further to the discussion held at the previous plenary meeting, at the current meeting the Panel was presented with a progress update on the ongoing assessment of titanium dioxide (E 171). In particular the Panel discussed and agreed on the structure of the scientific opinion and its several appendices that will document the process and the methodological approach followed for the risk assessment, including the criteria that have been used to select relevant literature and to appraise reliability of the results. In particular, with respect to the domain specific criteria developed upon advice from the cross-cutting (CC) WG Nanotechnologies for appraising the dispersion protocols used in the toxicity studies, the FAF Panel had several comments that would deserve further consideration by the WG TiO_2 ahead of the finalisation of the assessment. The points raised by the FAF Panel were also considered relevant for the ongoing finalisation of the draft EFSA Guidance on Particle Technical Requirements for regulated food and feed product applications to establish the presence of small particles including nanoparticles and will therefore be shared with the CC WG Nanotechnologies as well.

At the current plenary the FAF Panel also discussed and endorsed the preliminary conclusions from the WG TiO_2 on the extended one-generation reproductive toxicity study and received an update on the work done by the CC WG Genotoxicity.

Another progress update will be scheduled on the agenda of the next plenary meeting in January 2021, with the aim of finalising and adopting the scientific opinion by the deadline of 31st March 2021.

6.5. Re-evaluation of lecithins (E322) – erratum to the scientific opinion of the ANS Panel (EFSA-Q-2011-00500)

This agenda item was not discussed due to the lack of time. The adoption of the erratum to the scientific opinion on the re-evaluation of lecithins (E 322) issued by the ANS Panel will be dealt with by written procedure.

7. Feedback from the Scientific Committee/Scientific Panels, EFSA, the European Commission

7.1. Scientific Committee and Scientific Panel(s) including their Working Groups

This agenda item was not discussed due to the lack of time.

7.1.1. Scientific criteria for grouping chemicals into assessment groups for human risk assessment (RA) of combined exposure to multiple chemicals.

Due to lack of time, the discussion has been postponed for a forthcoming plenary meeting.

7.2. EFSA including its Working Groups/Task Forces

7.2.1. Update on Transparency Regulation

The Panel was presented with an update from the ART programme on the implementation of the Transparency Regulation that will be entering into force as of March 2021.

7.3. European Commission

This agenda item was not discussed due to the lack of time.

8. New mandates

Since the last Plenary meeting held in November 2020, no new mandates have been received.

8.1. Request for EFSA to perform a risk assessment and to provide a scientific opinion on the proposed extension of use of pullulan (E 1204) to several food categories

Since the last plenary meeting, this mandate (M-2020-0130) was considered valid by APDESK on 02/12/2020 and the scientific assessment is currently in progress (EFSA-Q-2020-00517). The drafting of the scientific output has been assigned to the WG Food Additives Applications since the application under Regulation (EC) No 1331/2008 concerns the proposal for extending the use of the food additive pullulan (E 1204) to several food categories. In addition, the current mandate received from the European Commission also requests EFSA to perform the re-evaluation of pullulan (E 1204) in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 257/2010 jointly with the evaluation of the proposed extension of use. To this end, an open call for data will be launched to gather relevant information from all possible interested parties, in line with the provisions of Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 257/2010.

9. Other scientific topics for information and/or discussion

None

10. Any Other Business

None