



Brussels, 12<sup>th</sup> December 2004

## **MINUTES OF THE 11th PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS**

**Held in Brussels on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2004**

### **AGENDA:**

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1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Information on the findings of a suspected case of BSE in a goat in France
5. Discussion on self tasking issues
  - 5.1 Recent developments and persistence of viruses in food
  - 5.2 Predictive microbiology as a tool in Risk Assessment
  - 5.3 Appropriateness of setting microbiological criteria
6. Official requests to EFSA.
  - 6.1 Presentation of new mandates received from the Commission
  - 6.2 Organization of Working Groups
7. Discussion and possible adoption of opinions
  - 7.1 Revision of meat inspection for beef
  - 7.2 Suitability and details of freezing methods to allow human consumption of meat infected with *Trichinella* or *Cysticercus*
  - 7.3 BSE risk assessment for Portugal
8. Progress reports and discussion on the following mandates:
  - 8.1 *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs
  - 8.2 *Bacillus* in foodstuffs
  - 8.3 *Clostridium* in foodstuffs
  - 8.4 Risk assessment of a revised inspection of slaughter animals in areas with low prevalence of *Trichinella*
  - 8.5 Risk assessment of a revised inspection of slaughter animals in areas with low prevalence of *Cysticercus*
  - 8.6 Washing of table eggs
  - 8.7 Evaluation of proposal for a different processing method for the production of collagen.
  - 8.8 Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk
  - 8.9 Animal By-products
    - i Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.
    - ii Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure

9. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
10. Feed-back by Panel members attending working groups of other panels
11. Any other business
  - 11.1 Collection of information on the prevalence of other foodborne pathogens than the zoonotic ones
  - 11.2 Information on the annual community report on zoonoses for 2005: Zoonosis Collaborating Center appointed by EFSA
12. Closure of the meeting

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**Held in Brussels on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2004**

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## **PARTICIPANTS**

### Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, Christian Ducrot, James Hope, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Ernst Lückner, Simone Magnino, Riitta Liisa Maijala, Antonio Martinez López, Christophe Nguyen-The, Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George- John Nychas, Maurice Pensaert, Terence Roberts, Ivar Vågsholm, Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch and Mac Johnston.

### Apologies

Ernst Lückner (1, 2), Simone Magnino (2), Christian Ducrot (2), James Hope (2)

### EFSA

Marta Hugas, Bart Goossens (1), Shamila Nair, Lucia Pena Alberdi (Scientific Staff)  
Angela Cohen (Administrative staff)

### Commission

DG Health and Consumer Protection: Taina Sateri, Joaquim Ordeig Vila (1),  
Valentina Piazza (1), Maija Hatakka (1)

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## **1. WELCOME**

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Prof Ernst Lückner. There were no additional declarations of Interest.

## **3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was adopted.

## **4. INFORMATION ON THE FINDINGS OF A SUSPECTED CASE OF BSE IN A GOAT IN FRANCE**

The French authorities informed the Commission of a high suspicion of BSE in a goat that was slaughtered in 2002 and had since undergone a series of confirmatory tests. Following this, EFSA has received a formal mandate from DG SANCO of the European Commission requesting EFSA's Scientific Panel on

Biological Hazards for advice and an update of the opinions related to “Assessment of safety with respect to consumption of goat products in relation to BSE/TSE”. The opinion should be delivered preferably before end of March 2005. In the meantime a statement has been sent to COM regarding the safety of goat milk and milk products in relation to TSE in goats. The direct and medium-term consequences for the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards will be to update previous opinions related to the BSE risk of consumption of goat products (and sheep products) in case BSE is confirmed in this goat.

The Scientific Expert Working group of the EFSA Biohaz panel published a preliminary statement on the safety of goat milk and derived products with regards to TSEs on 26 November 2004 [http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz\\_documents/catindex\\_en.html](http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/biohaz/biohaz_documents/catindex_en.html). SANCO issued a media statement on the same day with regards to the conclusions from the Community Reference Laboratory on TSE (CRL) [http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/library/press006\\_en.pdf](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/library/press006_en.pdf).

### **Overview of actions taken by EFSA**

A feasibility study was initiated to determine the availability and usefulness of existing or new scientific data and to collect other information as the basis for a quantitative assessment of the risks involved in the consumption of goat products. The services of the European Commission (EC) (DG Sanco) were invited to supply EFSA with the relevant data related to surveillance along with the research data available and regarding both goats and sheep. A letter was sent to the Advisory Forum of EFSA in order to request the MS and their national reference laboratories and different research institutes to provide EFSA with an update on any planned or on-going scientific research at national level linking BSE and small ruminants, including studies on the infectivity of milk. This was discussed and the composition of a WG was agreed; a first meeting is planned early January 2005.

## **5. DISCUSSION ON SELF TASKING ISSUES**

### **5.1. Recent developments and persistence of viruses in food**

A member of the Panel presented recent scientific literature on viruses in food and suggested a possible new Terms of Reference on this issue in the light of new scientific evidence. The Secretariat informed the Panel about a forthcoming WHO/FAO expert consultation about viruses in food. The Panel agreed to postpone the issue until after the WHO consultation has taken place.

### **5.2. Predictive microbiology as a tool in Risk Assessment**

The Panel discussed the possibility of identifying an issue for self tasking concerning the benefits of predictive microbiology and its application in risk assessment, especially when using new technologies. The Panel agreed to continue

its discussion on this issue. A member of the Panel will write background information and Terms of Reference to be discussed in the next plenary meeting.

### **5.3. Appropriateness of setting microbiological criteria**

A working draft document prepared by some members of the Panel on the use of criteria, food safety objectives, performance objectives and performance criteria was presented and discussed with the aim of adopting a common base before the pending adoption of several opinions (e.g. *Campylobacter*, *Bacillus* and *Clostridium*).

A small group of Panel members will work electronically to prepare a draft guidance document to be discussed at the next plenary.

The Commission representative suggested that a risk manager be invited to the next plenary to explain the New Regulation adopted in 2004 which will enter into force in 2006. This was agreed.

## **6. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA.**

### **6.1. Presentation of new mandates received from the Commission**

EFSA is asked to issue an opinion on waste management and the biological risks of using ready-to-use dairy by-products for animal feeding.

The representative from the EC presented the mandate to the Panel. Several concerns were raised with regard to the terms of reference, and EFSA will ask for further clarification from the EC, taking into consideration the different related aspects (zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance, animal welfare and public health)..

### **6.2. Organization of Working Groups**

Working Group (WG) on safety of goat products. See section under point 4 above.

## **7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF OPINIONS**

### **7.1. Revision of meat inspection for beef**

The Chairman of the working group presented the progress made on the conclusions and recommendations of the draft document, following the modifications suggested at the last Plenary meeting. The opinion was adopted after several amendments were made.

### **7.2. Suitability and details of freezing methods to allow human consumption of meat infected with *Trichinella* or *Cysticercus***

The rapporteur of the working group presented the revised draft document to the Plenary, taking into consideration the recommendations of the last plenary. The rapporteur will include the suggestions of the Panel in a revised version. The draft

opinion was conditionally adopted subject to written approval of the Panel by e-mail, within 10 days after receiving the draft document.

### **7.3. BSE risk assessment for Portugal**

The Chairman of the working group presented the draft opinion to the Plenary. After some short discussion and limited changes to the text, the draft opinion was adopted.

## **8. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES:**

### **8.1. *Campylobacter* in animals and foodstuffs**

The Chairman of the working group briefed the Panel on the progress made. At the last Plenary it was suggested to shorten the draft opinion; however, as it continues to be a comprehensive but extensive document the text will be modified wherever possible. The next working group was scheduled for the day after the Plenary with a view to consolidating the conclusions and recommendations. The revised draft document will be presented for possible adoption at the January plenary.

### **8.2. *Bacillus* in foodstuffs**

The Chairman of the working group presented the draft document and described the various chapters which were restructured following the Parma Plenary. The Chairman also briefed the Panel on the complexity of the taxonomy and virulence factors referred in the hazard identification. The draft opinion will be tabled for possible adoption at the next plenary meeting to be held in January 2005.

### **8.3. *Clostridium* in foodstuffs**

The Chairman of the working group briefed the Panel on the progress made. Useful suggestions for inclusion in the document were made by several panel members. The revised draft will be presented to the January Plenary for possible adoption.

### **8.4. Risk assessment of a revised inspection of slaughter animals in areas with low prevalence of *Trichinella***

The Chairman of the working group briefed the panel on the progress made regarding the draft document. The likelihood of foxes and other wild animals being infected and transmitting the disease was assessed in a series of exposure scenarios. Outdoor access to piglets will also be addressed in the draft document. The draft will be presented at the January Plenary for discussion.

### **8.5. Risk assessment of a revised inspection of slaughter animals in areas with low prevalence of *Cysticercus***

The Chairman of the working group presented the progress made on the draft document. The working group will consider quantitative exposure assessments based on the number of cysts present and will characterise hazards whenever

possible. The revised draft will be presented to the January Plenary for discussion. Possible adoption is foreseen by March.

#### **8.6. Washing of table eggs**

The working group held their first meeting relating to the mandate in September. The Chairman notified the Panel that the draft was progressing, although it was still in a preliminary stage. The draft document will address the different practices used for the washing of eggs and the advantages and disadvantages. The next meeting of the working group is scheduled for the 25th of January.

#### **8.7. Evaluation of proposal for a different processing method for the production of collagen.**

A first WG meeting was held on 24 September 2004 and following the meeting, it was concluded that the information on the production process in the present dossier as forwarded by the company is insufficient. A list of questions was drafted and sent to the company. The company forwarded its reply on November 19th.

The answers will be discussed at the next meeting of the WG on December 6th, 2004. Additionally a representative of the company has been invited to attend that meeting, to provide further clarification and to answer technical questions.

The WG is expected to come forward with a draft report to the Plenary at the January Plenary Meeting.

#### **8.8. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk**

A meeting of the WG was held on 29 and 30 November 2004 during which (i) the document on the assumptions and (ii) the document containing the calculations as prepared by DNV were presented by the Chairman of the WG as a merged document. This report is the basis for the update of the opinions relating to the COM mandate. This includes a request to update the opinions on tallow, gelatine, di- and tri- calcium phosphate, removal of vertebral column, and on meat and bone meal (MBM). A number of additional tasks were intended and some written comments are expected.

Chairman/rapporteurs were then appointed for each of the different opinions to be updated. The next meeting is scheduled for 20-21 January 2005.

#### **8.9. Animal By-products**

- i Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of ABP.
- ii Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure

The Chairman of the working group presented the progress made to-date. A meeting was held on 25 October and the next meeting is scheduled for 7 January 2005.

## **9. FEED-BACK BY THE CHAIRMAN ON SUBJECTS DISCUSSED IN THE SC OF INTEREST TO THE PANEL**

The chair of the Panel briefly informed about current discussions at the scientific committee. For more information please visit: [http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc\\_committee/sc\\_meetings/638/minutes9thplenaryscfinal1.pdf](http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc_committee/sc_meetings/638/minutes9thplenaryscfinal1.pdf)

## **10. FEED-BACK BY PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WORKING GROUPS OF OTHER PANELS**

Several Panel members attending working groups under the lead of other Scientific Panels briefly presented a summary of the current discussions.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **11.1. Collection of information on the prevalence of other foodborne pathogens than the zoonotic ones**

The Panel members were asked to express their views on the proposal to collect information on the prevalence of non-zoonotic foodborne pathogens in foodstuffs; the Panel decided to postpone the discussion for some time in order to allow consideration of the annual European report on foodborne outbreaks.

### **11.2. Information on the annual community report on zoonoses for 2005: Zoonosis Collaborating Center appointed by EFSA**

Earlier EFSA had published a call for tenders for a Zoonoses Collaboration Centre to assist EFSA to prepare the report on monitoring of zoonoses and zoonotic agents (Directive 2003/99/EC). The Danish Food and Veterinary Institute has been awarded recognition as the EFSA Zoonoses Collaboration Centre.

The BIOHAZ secretariat announced that the move of the BIOHAZ Team (including the Zoonoses Team and the BSE/TSE Team) to Parma premises will take place by mid-March 2005. A Panel member expressed concerns about the travelling time to Parma and the wish to have meetings of the Panel and its working groups in Brussels whenever possible.

The dates for the Plenary meetings in 2005 were agreed as follows: 26-27 January; 9-10 March; 27-28 April; 8-9 June; 12-13 July; 7-8 September; 26-27 October; 14- 15 December.

## **12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting closed at 14.45.