



EFSA
European Food Safety Authority

Parma, July 2005

MINUTES OF THE 16th PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS Held in Brussels on 12 and 13 July 2005

AGENDA:

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Minutes of the previous plenary
5. Self tasking issues - update
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. Washing of eggs
 - 7.2. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk. Opinion on meat and bone meal
 - 7.3. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk. Opinion on gelatine.
 - 7.4. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of biogas and compost treatment standards of Animal by Products (ABP).
 - 7.5. Safety vis-à-vis biological risk of heat treatment of manure.
8. Progress reports and discussion on the following mandates:
 - 8.1. The risk of feeding farmed animals with ready-to-use milk-based products and milk-derived products (ABP)
 - 8.2. Risk assessment of a reduced inspection system for pigs slaughtered in areas with a very low prevalence of *Trichinella*
 - 8.3. Risk reduction options of *Salmonella* in pig production
 - 8.4. Scientific advice on somatic cell count in goat milk
 - 8.5. Opinion on classification of atypical scrapie cases in sheep.
 - 8.6. Quantitative Risk Assessment for residual BSE risk. Progress reports on Vertebral Column, di-calcium phosphate (DCP) and tri-calcium phosphate (TCP).
 - 8.7. Microbiological testing, criteria and other objectives.

9. Feed-back by the Chairman on subjects discussed in the SC of interest to the Panel
10. Feed-back by the Panel members attending WG from other Panels
- 10.1. Rift Valley Fever – adoption on Public Health issues
11. AOB
12. Closure of the meeting

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic (13 July), Pierre Colin, John D. Collins, James Hope, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Ernst Lücker (12 July) Simone Magnino (12 July), Riitta Maijala, Antonio Martinez López, Christophe Nguyen-The (12 July), Birgit Noerrung, Servé Notermans, George- John Nychas, Maurice Pensaert (13 July), Terence Roberts, Ivar Vågsholm and Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch.

EFSA

Marta Hugas, Bart Goossens, Lucia Pena Alberdi, Didier Verloo and Eirini Tsigarida (Scientific Staff); Sylvie Volante; Sylvie Daloze (Administrative staff)

Commission

DG Health and Consumer Protection: Rosella Brozzi Bettio, Kris De Smet.

1. WELCOME

The Chair opened the meeting by welcoming everybody.

2. APOLOGIES AND DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The following apologies were received: Ernst Lücker (13 July), Christian Ducrot (12 and 13 July), Maurice Pensaert (12 July), Mac Johnston (12 and 13 July) and Christophe Nguyen-The (13 July)

There were no new declarations of interest.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS PLENARY

The minutes of the previous minutes were adopted.

5. SELF-TASKING ISSUES –UPDATE

See item 8.7.

6. OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA.

6.1. PRESENTATION OF NEW MANDATES RECEIVED FROM THE COMMISSION AND SETTING UP OF WORKING GROUPS.

6.1.1. Farming systems for calves

The mandate was introduced by the secretariat. The main issues of the mandate are updating of the findings of the former Scientific Veterinary Committee (Animal Welfare Section) report on the welfare of calves of 9 November 1995 on the welfare of calves and are in the scope of the AHAW Panel. The BIOHAZ Panel agreed to prepare, for adoption, an opinion on the possible food safety implications of different farming systems once the AHAW panel has identified the relevant systems.

6.1.2. Antimicrobial treatment on poultry carcasses

A new mandate was received from the European Commission (EC) requesting EFSA to evaluate the efficacy of peroxyacids for use as an antimicrobial substance applied on poultry carcasses and the efficacy and the safety for the consumer of lactic acid and of a formulation based on calcium sulfate when used as antimicrobial substances applied on poultry carcasses.

The request will be dealt by the BIOHAZ Panel who will assess the efficacy of these substances as antimicrobial agents on poultry carcasses and will prepare a separate Opinion on each agent; the AFC Panel will assess the safety of these substances for the consumer. There was an extensive discussion on the wide nature of the task and it was agreed that there was a need to develop a guidance document on the nature of the data required to be submitted for the assessment of such substances by Panels in the future. An *ad hoc* working group composed of members of the BIOHAZ Panel along with a member of the AFC Panel was set up and the first meeting will be held on the 1st of September.

7. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ADOPTION OF OPINIONS

7.1. WASHING OF EGGS

The Chair/Rapporteur presented the revised draft opinion to the Panel and an extensive discussion followed. Views were expressed regarding the content of the conclusions and recommendations and it was agreed that additional inputs were required in order to clearly reflect the findings contained in the draft opinion. Meanwhile, further clarification of the second Term of Reference will be requested from the Commission and this, when received, will require further consideration. It was decided to defer the adoption of the opinion to the next plenary meeting in September.

7.2. QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDUAL BSE RISK. OPINION ON MEAT AND BONE MEAL

The draft report on this mandate was presented by the chairman of the Working Group. A discussion was held on the formulation of the conclusion and recommendations after which the Report and Opinion were adopted by the Panel.

7.3. QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDUAL BSE RISK. OPINION ON GELATINE

The draft of this opinion was not presented for adoption but was dealt with under the heading of 'progress reports'. The report will be distributed to the Panel by email in anticipation of its presentation for adoption in September.

7.4. SAFETY VIS-À-VIS BIOLOGICAL RISK OF BIOGAS AND COMPOST TREATMENT STANDARDS OF ANIMAL BY PRODUCTS (ABP).

7.5. SAFETY VIS-À-VIS BIOLOGICAL RISK OF HEAT TREATMENT OF MANURE

The draft opinions for both 7.4 and 7.5 were presented and outlined by the Chairman of the Working Group and discussed by the members of the Panel. It was acknowledged that considerable progress had been made since the last plenary. A number of remarks were made related to the conclusions and recommendations which needed additional input in order to clearly reflect the findings contained in the two reports. As there were some major points for clarification, it was decided at this stage to defer the adoption of both Opinions to the next plenary meeting in September.

8. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES:

8.1. THE RISK OF FEEDING FARMED ANIMALS WITH READY-TO-USE MILK-BASED PRODUCTS AND MILK-DERIVED PRODUCTS

The Chair/Rapporteur reminded the members that this mandate is being addressed by both the AHAW Panel and the BIOHAZ Panel. The Panel was briefed on the outcome of the discussions following the second meeting which was a joint one between the working groups of the two Panels. The purpose of this joint meeting was to meet two external experts from the dairy and feed industry and discuss and clarify several technical aspects related to the mandate. The table of the contents was presented and agreed. The next Working Group meeting is scheduled to take place at the end of August.

8.2. RISK ASSESSMENT OF A REDUCED INSPECTION SYSTEM FOR PIGS SLAUGHTERED IN AREAS WITH A VERY LOW PREVALENCE OF *TRICHINELLA*

The Chair/Rapporteur introduced the revised version and a discussion was followed. The revised draft opinion will be tabled at the next plenary meeting for possible adoption.

8.3. RISK REDUCTION OPTIONS OF *SALMONELLA* IN PIG PRODUCTION.

The Rapporteur introduced the table of the contents of the first draft of the Report. It is expected that this first draft will be amended. The next working group meeting is scheduled to take place at the end of August.

8.4. SCIENTIFIC ADVICE ON SOMATIC CELL COUNT IN GOAT MILK SAFETY

A WG group was set up and the first meeting will be held in Brussels on August 30th. A first draft of this Advice is expected to be presented for consideration at the plenary meeting of the Panel in October 2005.

8.5. OPINION ON CLASSIFICATION OF ATYPICAL SCRAPIE CASES IN SHEEP

A WG has now been set up and has already held its first meeting. A draft report has been prepared in collaboration with the experts of the CRL; this draft will be amended further prior to its presentation at a future plenary meeting of the Panel. It was noted that the mandate refers to atypical cases of scrapie in sheep and the Panel suggested that the mandate be broadened to also include goats and that the title be re-drafted to read “atypical TSE cases in small ruminants”.

8.6. QUANTITATIVE RISK ASSESSMENT FOR RESIDUAL BSE RISK. PROGRESS REPORTS ON VERTEBRAL COLUMN, GELATINE, DI-CALCIUM PHOSPHATE (DCP) AND TRI-CALCIUM PHOSPHATE (TCP).

Progress on the preparation of draft reports was reported by the Chairman of the WG. The draft report on Gelatine, which will be distributed to Panel members for their consideration will be presented for adoption at the next meeting in September. The drafts on the two other subjects will also be distributed to the Panel members and will be presented for possible adoption at the meeting in October.

8.7. MICROBIOLOGICAL TESTING, CRITERIA AND OTHER OBJECTIVES

The Chair\Rapporteur summarised the outcome of the first meeting of this Working Group which took place on the 11th of July. During the WG meeting the main issues discussed were the new concepts of appropriate level of protection (ALOP), food safety objective (FSO) and performance objective (PO) and their link with microbiological criteria as well as microbiological risk assessment. Also, the terms, “target” and “objective” required to be clarified. A draft table of contents was outlined and the next meeting of the WG is scheduled on the 27th September.

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

The Chair briefed the Panel with the items discussed at the last Scientific Committee held in Brussels on 21st-22nd June

(http://www.efsa.eu.int/science/sc_committee/sc_meetings/catindex_en.html) including:

- The designation of competent organisations by the Member States for a scientific network in accordance with Article 36 of Regulation of 178/2002 of European Parliament and of the Council. The Secretariat explained that a letter describing this issue is being drafted and will be sent to the Permanent Representatives with a related questionnaire attached. Member States as well as the Scientific Panels of EFSA will be requested to complete this questionnaire;
- The participation of a member of the BIOHAZ Panel to the working group of the SC on the safety assessment of botanicals and botanical preparations;
- The food research priorities identified to-date by the SC.

10. FEED-BACK BY THE PANEL MEMBERS ATTENDING WG FROM OTHER PANELS

10.1. STUNNING AND KILLING COMMERCIALY FARMED SPECIES OF DEER, GOATS, RABBITS, OSTRICHES, DUCKS, GEESE AND QUAIL

The BIOHAZ Panel member involved in this Working Group briefed the members on the Terms of Reference and the progress made with the current mandate. BIOHAZ Panel will deal with the impact of the stunning/killing method used on the microbiological safety of the carcass and will present its Opinion in a separate chapter, a summary of which will also appear in the overall summary.

10.2. Qualified Presumption of Safety

The BIOHAZ Panel member involved in this Working Group reported that the WG is to be extended

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

11.1. SELF-TASKING MANDATES

One member of the Panel agreed to develop a draft discussion document and possible Terms of Reference covering different aspects of antimicrobial resistance related to microbiological safety and particularly to the impact on public health. This draft document will be discussed at the next plenary meeting, in September. Further discussion will be centred on this document at next plenary meeting, bearing in mind that this is a topic which is also being considered by other Panels.

11.2. RIFT-VALLEY FEVER – ADOPTION ON PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

The BIOHAZ Panel members involved in this Working Group informed the Panel that this topic was one Chapter in an Opinion that recently had been adopted from AWAH Panel. Pending consideration of some issues outstanding, the chapter under consideration will be presented for possible adoption at the next plenary meeting of the BIOHAZ Panel, in September. Also, a paragraph will be included in the summary of the conjoint Opinion regarding the public health aspects.

11.3. PRESS RELEASE

The Chair of the Panel briefed the members on the press release on health risks of goat meat and goat meat products with regard to BSE.
(http://www.efsa.eu.int/press_room/press_release/995_en.html)

11.4. ATTENDANCE TO COMMISSION WORKING GROUP MEETINGS ON TSE AND CWD

The secretariat briefed the BIOHAZ Panel on the outcome of several WG meetings held by the Commission.

- Commission Working group on BSE/TSE issues related to proposed revisions of legislation. Working group meeting of 4th of July. Following points were described:
 - the possible revision of the community provisions with regard to the culling, eradication, breeding programmes and herd certification with regard to TSE in small ruminants.
 - The Commission had informed the Member States of the recently published EFSA opinions and scientific advice viz. age review in cattle for SRM review and the Goat QRA; the scientific reports on new rapid tests for small ruminants and the recently adopted but yet to be published GBR assessments.
- Chronic Wasting Disease working group meeting June 9 2005.
This group met to discuss the follow up and the initiation of a surveillance programme for CWD in cervids in Europe in line with the conclusions and recommendations formulated in the EFSA opinion on CWD. COM is now preparing the legislation necessary to allow this surveillance to proceed.

11.5. EFSA SELF TASKING MANDATE ON THE REVIEW OF THE GBR METHODOLOGY.

A self tasking mandate regarding revision of GBR methodology had been requested by EFSA to be conducted under the *aegis* of the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards. This proposed revision had been mentioned at previous plenary meetings. Work on this self-tasking project can now commence as the assessment of countries, using the current GBR methodology, has now been completed and the remaining reports on these countries are to be published in September, 2005, or earlier. The composition of a WG was discussed and agreed.. A first WG meeting is scheduled to take place in early September

2005. The work, which may include a public consultation, is expected to be completed by the end of 2005.

11.6. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND POLICY

The Secretariat distributed a table and asked the members to indicate the time needed to travel from their place of departure to EFSA's offices in Brussels as compared to the time it takes to travel to EFSA's offices in Parma. Different issues such as the need to travel the day before and/or the day after the meeting were raised.

12. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

The meeting closed at 15.00.