

**MINUTES OF THE 43<sup>RD</sup> PLENARY MEETING OF  
THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS  
HELD IN VIENNA ON 22-23 OCTOBER 2008**

**AGENDA:**

1. OPENING, AND WELCOME FROM DR. GROSSGUT, AUSTRIAN MEMBER OF THE EFSA ADVISORY BOARD
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA
4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST
5. NEW REQUESTS TO EFSA/BIOHAZ
  - 5.1 Alternative method for carcass destruction using the bunker system (under EC no 1774/2002)
  - 5.2 Update on the risk for human and animal health related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime
  - 5.3 Use of Fuel Cal® technology as a new alternative method of disposal or use of ABP
6. POSSIBLE ADOPTIONS
  - 6.1 TSE infectivity in milk and milk products from small ruminants
  - 6.2 Food safety aspects from the welfare of farmed fish
7. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES
  - 7.1 Follow up of the QPS approach for assessing the safety of microorganisms intentionally added to the food chain
  - 7.2 Evaluation of TSE tests
  - 7.3 Technical guide for the scientific data collection on antimicrobial resistance within the frame work of the use of antimicrobial treatments (AMTs) for the decontamination of poultry carcasses
  - 7.4 Use and mode of action of bacteriophages in food production
  - 7.5 Microbiological efficacy of food irradiation
  - 7.6 Public health significance of meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)
  - 7.7 Quantitative estimation of the public health impact of setting a new target for the reductions of *Salmonella* in breeding hens
  - 7.8 Quantitative estimation of the public health impact of setting a new target for the reductions of *Salmonella* in laying hens
  - 7.9 Quantitative estimation of the public health impact of setting a new target for the reductions of *Salmonella* in broilers
  - 7.10 Request for an update and quantification of the risk posed by *Campylobacter* in broiler meat production
  - 7.11 Technical assistance on the link between *Salmonella* criteria at different stages of the poultry production chain
  - 7.12 Special measures to reduce the risk for consumers through *Salmonella* in table eggs – e.g. Cooling of table eggs

- 7.13 QMRA on *Salmonella* in slaughter and breeding pigs
- 7.14 The use of antibiotic resistance genes as marker genes in genetically modified plants
- 7.15 Food safety aspects from the welfare of dairy cows
- 7.16 Food safety aspects from the main systems of stunning and killing of farmed fish
- 8. FEEDBACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND FROM OTHER WGs
- 9. STANDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA
- 9.1 Food safety issues of Avian Influenza
- 9.2 Emerging risks
- 9.3 Update on other EFSA activities related to biological hazards issues
- 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- 10.1 Feedback from industries on Feedingstuffs
- 10.2 Briefing on the STEG meeting regarding suspected BSE in a UK goat
- 10.3 Briefing on PRION 2008
- 10.4 Financial Statement Application
- 10.5 Forward looking thoughts
- 11 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

## **PARTICIPANTS**

### Panel Members:

Olivier Andreoletti, Herbert Budka, Sava Buncic, Pierre Colin, John D Collins, Aline De Koeijer, John Griffin, Arie Havelaar, James Hope, Günter Klein, Hilde Kruse, Simone Magnino, Antonio Martínez López, Karsten Noeckler, Birgit Noerrung, Christophe Nguyen-The, Miguel Prieto Maradona, Terence Roberts, Ivar Vägsholm and Emmanuel Vanopdenbosch.

### EFSA:

Marta Hugas, Fulvio Barizzone, Michaela Hempen, Tobin Robinson, Bianca Bottoni (Administrative staff).

### European Commission (EC):

DG Health and Consumers: Sabine Osaer and Koen van Dyck.

## **1. OPENING AND WELCOME FROM DR. GROSSGUT, AUSTRIAN MEMBER OF THE EFSA ADVISORY BOARD**

The Chair welcomed everyone. Dr Grossgut welcomed the Panel to Vienna and introduced the work of the Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from James McLauchlin

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

The agenda was adopted.

## **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no new declarations of interest.

## **5. NEW REQUESTS TO EFSA/BIOHAZ**

### **5.1. ALTERNATIVE METHOD FOR CARCASS DESTRUCTION USING THE BUNKER SYSTEM**

A request was received from the Spanish Competent Authority to evaluate the safety of a new alternative method for carcass destruction using the bunker system. A working group will be formed.

### **5.2. UPDATE ON THE RISK FOR HUMAN AND ANIMAL HEALTH RELATED TO THE REVISION OF THE BSE MONITORING REGIME**

The mandate was received from the EC requesting an update on the risk for human and animal health related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime, taking into account epidemiological data from EU 15 Member States, Slovenia and Cyprus. The proposed deadline for this opinion is 31 March 2009. A working group is to be formed.

### **5.3. USE OF FUELCAL® TECHNOLOGY AS A NEW ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF DISPOSAL OR USE OF ABP**

A request was received from the Competent Authority in Poland to evaluate the safety of the FuelCal® technology as a new alternative method for processing Animal By-Products. A working group will be formed.

## **6. POSSIBLE ADOPTIONS**

### **6.1. TSE INFECTIVITY IN MILK AND MILK PRODUCTS FROM SMALL RUMINANTS**

The draft opinion was adopted pending agreed editorial changes.

### **6.2. FOOD SAFETY ASPECTS FROM THE WELFARE OF FISH**

The draft opinion was adopted pending agreed editorial changes.

## **7. PROGRESS REPORTS AND DISCUSSION ON THE FOLLOWING MANDATES**

### **7.1. FOLLOW-UP OF THE QPS<sup>1</sup> APPROACH FOR ASSESSING THE SAFETY OF MICROORGANISMS INTENTIONALLY ADDED TO THE FOOD CHAIN**

The WG met on 26 September. A draft report was presented for discussion. Comments were received and a final draft will be submitted to the Panel for consideration for adoption at the next plenary meeting.

### **7.2. EXAMINATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS FOR TSE TEST SUITABLE TO ENTER INTO A FORMAL EVALUATION PROGRAMME**

The WG met on 21 October. The assessment of the dossiers provided by the applicants was completed according to the requirements of the Commission Call for expression of interest 2007/S204-247339. Recommendations on the tests considered suitable to enter into a formal evaluation program will be forwarded to the Commission Services.

### **7.3. TECHNICAL GUIDE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC DATA COLLECTION ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE USE OF AMTs<sup>2</sup> FOR THE DECONTAMINATION OF POULTRY CARCASSES**

The WG met on 23 September. The scheduled meeting in November was cancelled pending clarification from Commission and discussion from the Agriculture Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Qualified Presumption of Safety

<sup>2</sup> Antimicrobial treatments

#### **7.4. USE AND MODE OF ACTION OF BACTERIOPHAGES IN FOOD PRODUCTION**

The WG was established and will meet for the first time in October.

#### **7.5. MICROBIOLOGICAL EFFICACY OF FOOD IRRADIATION**

The WG is being established and a first meeting is foreseen for January 2009.

#### **7.6. PUBLIC HEALTH SIGNIFICANCE OF METICILLIN RESISTANT STAPHYLOCOCCUS AUREUS (MRSA)**

The Table of Contents of the draft opinion was presented for comments.

#### **7.7. QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF SETTING A NEW TARGET FOR THE REDUCTION OF *SALMONELLA* IN BREEDING HENS**

The first meeting of this WG was held on 7 October. The approach taken for this mandate was discussed. Adoption of the draft opinion is foreseen for March 2009.

#### **7.8. QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF SETTING A NEW TARGET FOR THE REDUCTION OF *SALMONELLA* IN LAYING HENS**

The approach to the problem was discussed at the first WG meeting held on 7 October. The possibility for outsourcing part of the work is being investigated.

#### **7.9. QUANTITATIVE ESTIMATION OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACT OF SETTING A NEW TARGET FOR THE REDUCTION OF *SALMONELLA* IN BROILERS**

The WG established for 7.7 will also address this mandate. The approach to be adopted will be addressed at the next WG meeting, foreseen for January 2009.

#### **7.10. REQUEST FOR AN UPDATE AND QUANTIFICATION OF THE RISK POSED BY *CAMPYLOBACTER* IN BROILER MEAT PRODUCTION**

The WG is being formed. The first meeting will be held in November 2008.

#### **7.11. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON THE LINK BETWEEN *SALMONELLA* CRITERIA AT DIFFERENT STAGES OF THE POULTRY PRODUCTION CHAIN**

The first meeting of the WG was held on 3 October. The data provided through a call were reviewed. An outsourced project is being initiated.

#### **7.12. SPECIAL MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK FOR CONSUMERS THROUGH *SALMONELLA* IN TABLE EGGS – E.G. COOLING OF TABLE EGGS**

The WG met on the 21 October. The draft conclusions were discussed. The next meeting is scheduled on 3 December. A first reading of the draft opinion is planned for the December plenary.

### **7.13. QMRA ON SALMONELLA IN SLAUGHTER AND BREEDING PIGS**

A WG meeting was held on 15-16 October. The consortium presented results from the first six months. The Commission is in the process of outsourcing the cost-benefit analysis and its work will be coordinated with that of the WG. Adoption will probably be delayed due to delays foreseen in the delivery of the breeder pigs baseline study. An intermediate report on slaughter pigs is foreseen in June 2009 outlining the effect of processing interventions on the prevalence and concentration of salmonella in retail pig meat, and potentially the risk of human illness. Next meeting planned for January 2009.

### **7.14. THE USE OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE GENES AS MARKER GENES IN GENETICALLY MODIFIED PLANTS**

The WG met on 8 October. The position of the BIOHAZ Panel on this issue was discussed. The opinion will be co-adopted by both GMO and BIOHAZ Panels.

### **7.15. FOOD SAFETY ASPECTS FROM THE WELFARE OF DAIRY COWS**

A draft document was presented. A combined food safety chapter addressing all four related AHAW opinions will be prepared.

### **7.16. FOOD SAFETY ASPECTS FROM THE MAIN SYSTEMS OF STUNNING AND KILLING OF FARMED FISH**

The BIOHAZ opinion will focus on the food safety relevance of the main systems of stunning and killing farmed fish. The Deadline has been extended to May 2009.

## **8. FEED BACK FROM THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE AND FROM OTHER WGS**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Plenary meeting of the Scientific Committee was held on 25-26 July<sup>3</sup>.

## **9. STANDING ITEMS ON THE AGENDA:**

### **9.1. FOOD SAFETY ISSUES OF AVIAN INFLUENZA**

There had been no indications of food safety concerns.

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa\\_locale-1178620753812\\_1211902088103.htm](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902088103.htm)

## **9.2. EMERGING RISKS**

A presentation from the Emerging Risks Unit will be made at the next plenary meeting.

## **9.3. UPDATE ON OTHER EFSA ACTIVITIES RELATED TO BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS ISSUES**

Current activities of the Zoonoses Unit were presented to the Panel.

## **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **10.1. FEEDBACK FROM INDUSTRIES ON FEEDINGSTUFFS**

To be addressed at the next plenary meeting.

### **10.2. BRIEFING ON THE STEG MEETING REGARDING SUSPECTED BSE IN A UK GOAT**

An update of the state of play concerning a suspected case of BSE-infected goat in the UK was presented.

### **10.3. BRIEFING ON PRION 2008 BIOHAZ**

A summary of information presented at the PRION 2008 meeting held in Madrid on 7-10 October was made available to the Panel.

### **10.4. FINANCIAL STATEMENT APPLICATION**

A written description of the new internet tool was provided to the panel. A presentation on this issue will be made at the next plenary if needed.

### **10.5. FORWARD LOOKING THOUGHTS**

The paper concerning the prospective challenges facing the EFSA's BIOHAZ Panel during the next 10 years had been adopted by written procedure.

## **11. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting closed at 15.20.