

Parma, 10 August 2007
EFSA/CONTAM/627

**MINUTES OF THE 21TH PLENARY MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC PANEL ON
CONTAMINANTS IN THE FOOD CHAIN (CONTAM) HELD ON 24 TO 27
APRIL 2007 IN PARMA**

adopted by written procedure on 20 July 2007

PARTICIPANTS

Panel Members:

Jan Alexander, Guðjón Atli Auðunsson, Diane Benford, Andrew Cockburn, Jean-Pierre Cravedi, Alessandro di Domenico, Eugenia Dogliotti, Maria Luisa Fernández-Cruz, Johanna Fink-Gremmels (vice-chair)¹, Corrado Galli², Philippe Grandjean³, Jadwiga Gzyl, Gerhard Heinemeyer, Niklas Johansson, Antonio Mutti, Josef Schlatter (chair), Rolaf van Leeuwen (vice-chair)², Carlos van Peteghem⁴, and Philippe Verger².

EFSA

Valeria Bernazzali (Administrative Assistant, Unit on Contaminants), Ulla Bertelsen (Senior Officer, Unit on Contaminants), Jean-Lou Dorne (Senior Officer, Unit on Contaminants), Pia Fallström-Mujkic (Administrative Assistant, Unit on Contaminants), Claudia Heppner (Head of Unit on Contaminants/Scientific Co-ordinator), Muriel Pesci (Administrative Assistant, Unit on Contaminants).

European Commission

Frans Verstraete (DG Health and Consumer Protection), Gudrun Gallhof (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

1. WELCOME

The vice-chair, Rolaf van Leeuwen, welcomed the members of the CONTAM Panel to the 21th plenary meeting. Josef Schlatter chaired the meeting 25 to 27 April 2007. Valeria Bernazzali, administrative assistant, and Muriel Pesci, temporary administrative assistant, were introduced as they recently joined the EFSA's Unit on Contaminants.

¹ Only present on 24 to 25 April 2007

² Only present on 24 to 26 April 2007

³ Only present on 25 to 26 April 2007

⁴ Only present on 25 to 27 April 2007

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Fürst. The Panel conveyed all the best wishes to Peter Fürst for a quick recovery.

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The proposed agenda was adopted with the following modification: item 5, draft opinion on glucosinolates as undesirable substances in animal feed, was only considered for discussion and not for adoption due to the late arrival of the document.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No members of the CONTAM Panel declared any interests related to the items on the agenda of the 21th CONTAM plenary meeting.

5. DISCUSSIONS ON GLUCOSINOLATES AS UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED.

The chair of the working group (WG) on undesirable substances in animal feed (USAF) subsection: natural plant products (NPP) introduced the draft opinion on glucosinolates as undesirable substances in animal feed. The Panel gave advice on how to handle the uncertainties in the exposure assessment due to the scarce occurrence data of glucosinolates and its bioactive compounds in animal feed. In order to address the importance of *Camelina sativa* with regard to the presence of glucosinolates in animal feed the Panel recommended having a separate subchapter on this matter in the opinion.

6. HORMONE RESIDUES IN BOVINE MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS. DRAFT OPINION.

The chair of the WG on hormones introduced the draft opinion on hormone residues in bovine meat and meat products (question number: EFSA-Q-2005-048). The members of the Panel agreed on the general approach taken, but during the discussions a number of revisions as well as changes to the structure of the opinion were proposed. Therefore, it was recommended to present the opinion for adoption at the next Panel meeting again.

7. DISCUSSIONS ON CARRY-OVER OF LASALOCID INTO NON-TARGET ANIMAL FEED.

The chair of the WG on coccidiostats introduced the draft opinion on the carry-over of lasalocid into non-target animal feed (question number: EFSA-Q-2005-220C).

The chair was seeking feedback from the Panel as for lasalocid two different acceptable daily intakes (ADIs) have been derived by the EMEA (Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use) and the EFSA (FEEDAP Panel). The Panel recommended using the ADI derived by the EFSA as and provided some advice on how to interpret the effects from ionophoric compounds on the cardiovascular system obtained in animal studies with regard to human health. The Panel also discussed whether all six coccidiostats opinions representing ionophoric compounds should be presented in one package to the next Panel meeting. It was agreed that this would be ideal, however in case this can not be achieved by the WG only the opinions which are ready shall be presented at the next Panel meeting in June 2007. The Panel was informed that discussions at the risk management level will only start once all eleven opinions are available.

8. PERFLUOROCTANE SULFONATE (PFOS) AND PERFLUOROCTANOIC ACID (PFOA) AND THEIR SALTS. DRAFT OPINION

The chair of the WG introduced the draft opinion on PFOS/A (question number: EFSA-Q-2004-163). This opinion is a self-tasking activity of the CONTAM Panel. During the discussions the members of the Panel proposed a number of revisions such as a refinement of the exposure assessment and provided guidance on the approach to be taken in the risk characterisation part of the opinion. A revised version of the opinion will be presented to the CONTAM plenary meeting in September 2007. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation for the work carried out so far by the WG.

9. HEPTACHLOR AS AN UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCE IN ANIMAL FEED. DRAFT OPINION.

The chair of the WG on USAF subsection persistent organic pollutants (POPs) introduced the draft opinion on heptachlor as an undesirable substance in animal feed (question number: EFSA-Q-2005-184). The Panel adopted the opinion subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the meeting. The chair of the CONTAM Panel expressed his appreciation for the work to the WG.

10. FEEDBACK FROM THE 23RD AND 24TH SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE (SC) MEETING

The minutes of the 23rd ⁵ as well as the 24th ⁶ plenary meeting of the SC are published on the EFSA web page. The chair pointed out the following items related to the 24th plenary meeting of the SC:

⁵ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/sc_committee/sc_meetings/23rd_sc_meeting.html

⁶ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/sc_committee/sc_meetings/24th_sc_meeting.html

- ***Management Board (MB) away day***

The MB away day was dedicated to the workload of the Scientific Panels and the SC. The members were informed that the chair of the MB has circulated a paper addressing the three main areas of concern identified by the EFSA experts, i.e. the workload, work conditions and experts' recognition. These recommendations have also been published on the EFSA website⁷.

- ***Declaration of interests***

The SC discussed the new forms for the annual and subject-related declarations of interests aiming at higher levels of transparency. An updated version will be reconsidered at the next SC plenary meeting (9 to 10 July 2007).

- ***WG on animal cloning***

EFSA received a question from the European Commission concerning the implication of animal cloning on food safety, animal health and welfare and the environment. The question was allocated to the SC, considering that a broad expertise is needed. A draft opinion for public consultation is planned to be available before the end of this year.

- ***In- and external review***

The SC WG on in- and external review drafted a proposal for reviewing the scientific quality of EFSA's scientific work. This document will be finalised at the next SC plenary meeting in July 2007. Panel Chairs were invited to apply already the proposed self-review checklist for upcoming opinions.

11. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM EFSA

The Scientific Co-ordinator informed the Panel members on following matters which are of relevance to the CONTAM Panel:

- ***Advisory forum meeting 19 April 2007, Berlin***

The main objective of this meeting was a follow up on strengthening the cooperation and networking between EFSA and the member states (MS), EFTA and Pre-Accession countries (observers). Feedback from the first meeting of the Steering Group on Cooperation (SGC) of 21 March 2007 and discussion on the projects proposed by the SGC such as i) harmonisation of the food consumption database, ii) harmonisation of chemical data collection in food and feed and iii) setting up a database of scientific experts in the EU which could assist EFSA in its scientific work have been agreed. At the 1st meeting of the MS food consumption database managers most participants agreed to contribute to the EFSA concise food

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See http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/mboard/mb_meetings/mb_30th_meeting.Par.0022.File.dat/mb_pw_30thmeet_away_day_paper.pdf

consumption database comprising 15 food categories. The deadline for data submission is October 2007.

- ***MB meeting 27 March 2007 and MB away day***

For the first time a Panel chair, Sue Barlow from the AFC Panel, has attended the MB meeting. All chairs of the Panel will be given the opportunity to join a MB meeting and inform the MB on the latest developments of the Panels. The presentation given by Sue Barlow was very much appreciated by the members of the MB. Furthermore, the MB also discussed how EFSA can better support its Scientific Panels and the SC aiming at reducing the current high workload. EFSA will further develop the paper in-house. Events within the context of the celebration of EFSA's 5th anniversary were also presented.

- ***Article 36 co-operation***

Article 36 "Networking of organisation operation in the fields within the Authority's mission" as laid down in the founding regulation of EFSA⁸ is now operational. The first call on "quantitative microbiological risk assessment on Salmonella in slaughter and breeder pigs" which falls within the remit of the BIOHAZ Unit was launched. Further calls falling within the competence of the following Units zoonoses, data collection and exposure assessment as well as PPR will follow shortly. A possible call for CONTAM is scheduled for 2008. The Panel members are invited to provide inputs with regard to the content of such a call to the Secretariat.

- ***Colloquium***

The next up upcoming EFSA colloquium on "Environmental Risk Assessment of Genetically Modified Plants – Challenges and Approaches" will be held on 20 -21 June 2007, in Tabiano, Italy. Further details can be found on the Authority's web page⁹.

- ***Workshop on bioactive compounds***

A workshop on bioactive compounds will be organised on 2 to 3 May 2007 in Parma. The DG research project "EuroFIR-BASIS", a database on bioactive constituents on major European food plants and edible mushrooms, as well as the outcome of the Council of Ministers project "NORTOX-BASIS database" will be presented.

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http://www.efsa.europa.eu/etc/medialib/efsa/about_efsa/cooperation/art_36_cooperation/1065.Par.0001.File.dat/178_2002_efsagenfoodlaw1.pdf

⁹ http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/colloquium_series/Colloquium_8_gmo.html

- ***Recruitment CONTAM unit***

Both Valeria Berlazzali (IT) and Muriel Pesci (IT, temporarily) joined the CONTAM Unit as administrative assistants on 1st of March 2007. Pia Mujkic-Fallström will be on maternity leave from August 2007 to February 2008. Further details regarding the replacement of Pia Mujkic-Fallström during her temporary absence will follow. A call for a vacancy in the CONTAM unit, AD7 scientific officer/co-ordination, closed in March 2007, and interviews are scheduled for May 2007.

12. GENERAL INFORMATION FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION SERVICES ON MATTERS RELATING TO CONTAM

The Service within the European Commission (EC) responsible for legislation on food safety informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that currently discussions are taking place regarding revision of maximum levels for Fusarium-toxins in maize and maize products. Commission Regulation (EC) No 1881/2006 of 19 December 2006 lays down maximum levels for deoxynivalenol, zearalenone and fumonisins in unprocessed maize, maize and maize products, however it was also indicated to reconsider these maximum levels in case new information, which is the case, is available. Furthermore, discussions are taking place with regards setting levels for ochratoxin A following the opinion of CONTAM Panel on ochratoxin A in food adopted in 2006. The Expert Committee “Agricultural Contaminants”, as working party of the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health, has considered the issue by taking into account the conclusions of the EFSA opinion, recent occurrence data and comments made by stakeholder organisations. Current discussions propose to set levels for spices and licorice. No maximum levels for ochratoxin A might be set for meat, cocoa beans, green coffee, beer, edible offals, blood products cocoa products, dried fruits other than dried vine fruit, and liqueur wines. With regard to environmental contaminants the setting of maximum levels for cadmium in certain fish species as well as in food supplements is being discussed.

13. WORKING PROGRAMME

13.1 OFFICIAL REQUESTS TO EFSA FOR CONTAM PANEL

The Panel was informed by the EC that the following requests which fall within the remit of the CONTAM Panel are currently in preparation i) possible health concerns of alternaria toxins in order to provide guidance to the EC to define further strategies such as monitoring of the presence of these toxins in food; ii) morphine in poppy seeds – some members states have legislation in place, and the question was raised whether the setting of European maximum levels might be needed. Within this context, it was pointed out that the EFSA’s advisory forum has

some activities in this area ongoing, and it is anticipated that once this question will be asked to EFSA, good co-operation will take place. EFSA is looking forward to receiving these requests.

13.2 UPDATE FROM THE WORKING GROUP (WG) ON UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED – SECTION NATURAL PLANT PRODUCTS

The scientific officer of the EFSA Unit on Contaminants informed the Panel members, that the work is progressing well for the opinions tropane alkaloids and ricin as undesirable substances in animal feed. The WG will however, first concentrate on incorporating the changes proposed to the opinion on glucosinolates as undesirable substances (see item 5). The chair of the WG undesirable substances in animal feed – section persistent organic pollutants will join the WG from September onwards.

13.3 UPDATE FROM THE WG ON UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED – SECTION PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS

The chair of the WG informed the Panel, that the work with regard to the opinion on chlordane as an undesirable substance in animal feed is progressing well, and this opinion can be expected to be presented for possible adoption at the September or November plenary meeting.

13.4 UPDATE FROM THE WG ON UNDESIRABLE SUBSTANCES IN ANIMAL FEED – SECTION HEAVY METALS (MERCURY)

The chair of the WG informed the Panel that from a structure point of view the opinion will be presented like the other opinions of this series. Data on mercury in feedingstuffs have been received from the Member States and these data are currently been summarised. It is anticipated that the opinion could be ready in September for presenting it to the CONTAM Panel.

13.5 UPDATE ON THE WG ON COCCIDIOSTATS

The scientific officer of the EFSA Unit on Contaminants informed the Panel, that the WG will concentrate on the finalisation of all the eleven coccidiostats opinions.

13.6 UPDATE FROM THE WG ON MARINE BIOTOXINS

The chair of the WG informed the members of the Panel that since the 20th plenary meeting two WG meetings took place, one focusing on exposure aspects only. The WG has made good progress on the first opinion on okadaic acid, and a second opinion on azaspiracid is in preparation. The WG discussed in more detail how to use the occurrence data as well as what is a good estimate of a portion size for mussels within Europe.

13.7 UPDATE FROM THE WG ON NITRATES IN VEGETABLES

The chair of the WG informed the members of the CONTAM Panel that three meetings have been taken place since the establishment of this WG. It was noted that only few data are in the public domain summarising the influence of processing on the loss of nitrate in vegetables. Even food processing companies were not in the position to provide such data. Since the latest toxicological evaluation of nitrate by the JECFA and IARC only few new toxicological papers have been published. For the chapter on risk-benefits a more pragmatic approach will be taken by the WG as this is a new area and the WG can not wait until the first outcomes of e.g. some research projects are available.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

As a substantial amount of opinions would be presented to the 22nd plenary meeting, it was agreed to extend the 22nd plenary meeting by one day, meaning the meeting will start on 11 June 2007 at 14.00 hrs and finish on 14 June 2007 at 13.00 hrs.