



# Stakeholder Consultative Platform Upcoming scientific issues

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**Press Officer**

# Flavouring Group Evaluation

- Within the framework of Reg (EC) 1565/2000 EFSA to evaluate flavouring substances
- Task to be completed in the second half of 2007
- Based on EFSA evaluation the EC will propose a positive list
- Altogether some 2800 flavourings under discussion, of which > 1000 had to be evaluated by EFSA
- 2 negative opinions so far: EC subsequently banned these substances
- Communication foreseen upon completion of the group evaluation

- The European Ramazzini Foundation carried out new study on aspartame
- The study presented at the Mount Sinai Medical School in New York City on 23 April
- Not much media coverage so far.
- EFSA prepared to evaluate the new study

- JECFA has evaluated aluminium and has lowered the provisional tolerable weekly intake (PTWI) by factor 7
- EFSA to evaluate aluminium from all sources of dietary intake on request of EC
- Opinion not expected before November 2007
- Media interest → communications strategy tbc

- Exposure assessment by the AFC Panel in 2005:
  - First Opinion on ITX published December 2005
  - Conclusions:
    - ITX an undesirable substance, however
    - No health concern at the levels reported
- Issue attracted (media) attention in Member States
- EFSA requested by EC to update its previous opinion
- Update expected in summer 2007

- EFSA Opinion updating previous Opinion from 2005 on removal of Specified Risk Material (e.g. spinal cord, vertebral column, brain, intestines) in cattle in order to prevent BSE
- EFSA Opinion concerning infectivity in the Central Nervous System at about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the incubation time remains unchanged
- Commission will now consider EFSA's advice
- Opinion adopted last week
- Press release to be issued shortly

- EFSA to evaluate if there is new evidence since previous evaluation in 2002
- Implications for trade issues with US :
  - Hormones allowed in US and
  - Banned in EU
- Great media interest expected
- Publication likely in June/July 2007, communication activities required

- Maximum Levels for nitrate in lettuce and spinach are set in EU legislation
- Indications of nitrate level in other vegetables are unclear (e.g. rocket)
- Risk assessment needed to provide scientific basis for a longer-term strategy for managing the risk from nitrate in vegetables
- To include risk-benefit approach taking account of benefits of eating vegetables
- Opinion expected in autumn 2007

# Acrylamide (AA)

- A number of heated foods contain significant levels
- Considered to be carcinogenic and genotoxic (JECFA, WHO, SCF and EFSA)
- Many efforts made by industry to reduce the level in prepared foods; training and information of consumers by national authorities of Member States
- New studies to be published in The Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden in the next months
- Extremely sensitive issue
- Coordinated communication planned

- EFSA published 2 related opinions on MON 863 in 2004 which said that MON 863 would not have an adverse effect on human and animal health or the environment in the context of its proposed use
- In March 2007 the CRIIGEN research organisation (Prof. Séralini) published a study on Monsanto MON 863
- EFSA's GMO Panel discussed the study at its last Panel meeting in March
- EFSA will be consulting Member States for any further relevant data. Based on work of GMO Panel, and input from Member States, EFSA will then give its considered response to the Commission. EFSA will publish further information on MON 863 in May

# Environmental Risk Assessment Colloquium

- Main focus: different approaches to environmental risk assessment
- 20-21 June, Tabiano (Parma)
- Leading European and International scientific experts
- Registration – “first come first served” or latest May 21st
- Communication foreseen on the day of the event

- GMO products authorized ten years ago are up for renewal (10 year authorisations) if companies want to keep them on the market
- EFSA to receive applications for renewal during May
- EFSA has prepared specific guidance document for their evaluation (public consultation last year)
- No communications planned for the moment though some media interest

## EFSA'S TASKS

- 1. Guidance for preparation and presentation of applications for authorisation of health claims**
  - EFSA received mandate from the EC
  - Priority for the Panel
  - Draft expected in summer 2007, consultation with Member States and stakeholders planned, also public consultation on the web
- 2. EFSA's opinion on individual applications**
  - EFSA to verify scientific substantiation of health claims
  - EFSA to consider the wording of a health claims
- 3. Nutritional Profiles**
  - EFSA received mandate from the EC
- 4. List of permitted health claims (Art 13)**
  - EFSA to be consulted on list of "function claims" used in EU Member States

# Cumulative Risk Assessment of Pesticides

- No internationally agreed methodology to assess risks from exposure to one or more agents
- Methodology to be developed by EFSA before winter 2007
- The Netherlands, the USA and the UK already have carried out work in this area

- EFSA received **mandate** by EC to advise on implications regarding
  - **Food safety**
  - **Animal health**
  - **Animal welfare and**
  - **Environment implications**
- Covers live cloned animals, their offspring and products obtained from those animals
- EFSA focuses on the scientific risk assessment, whilst another mandate given by EC to the European Group of Ethics for an opinion on ethical aspects of cloning
- US FDA report on cloning expected in summer 2007
- EFSA Scientific Committee has established a working group, consultation with Member States and stakeholders planned

# Killing and skinning of seals

- Based on European Parliament declaration, European Commission requested EFSA risk assessment
- Will cover current methods used for killing and skinning seals & most appropriate/suitable killing methods for seals which reduce unnecessary pain, distress and suffering
- Non-food related animal welfare issues also within EFSA's mandate
- High public interest in the issue
- Opinion expected by December 2007

- **AVIAN INFLUENZA VACCINES**
- Update on most recent development of vaccines against Avian Influenza (H5 and H7 subtypes)
- Evaluate laboratory testing methods for surveillance of vaccinated poultry flocks (DIVA – Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals)
- Web story and Opinion foreseen for publication at the beginning of May (adoption this week?)

- **BLUETONGUE**
- Report on Epidemiological analysis of bluetongue virus - published
- Opinion on role played by vectors/insects in spread of Bluetongue and means to control them
- Update on vaccines used and assessment of different approaches to vaccination and suitability of vaccination to control BT

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
ATTENTION!**