European Food Safety Authority

Stakeholder Consultative Platform
Recent and upcoming scientific issues

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Carola Sondermann
Senior Press Officer

Flavouring Group Evaluation

- Within the framework of Reg (EC) 1565/2000 EFSA to evaluate flavouring substances
- Task to be completed mid 2008
- Altogether **some 2800 flavourings** of which more than 1000 still to be evaluated by EFSA
- Based on EFSA evaluations the Commission will propose a positive list
- Communication foreseen upon completion of the group evaluation or as appropriate

Smoke flavourings

- EFSA originally received 16 dossiers of which some were withdrawn by the applicant
- Primary Product FF-B considered by the Panel to be of health concern (weakly genotoxic *in vivo)*, application withdrawn and import to the EU stopped by manufacturer
- **12 dossiers** still to be evaluated
- Communication as appropriate

Food colours

1. **Re-evaluation of all food colours** in the framework of a systematic re-evaluation of food additives - ongoing
    - One colour, Red 2 G, was of health concern; shortly after EFSA published its opinion in July the food colour was banned by the risk managers i.e. Commission and Member States

2. **Evaluation of the Southampton study** commissioned by FSA UK linking a number of food colours to hyperactivity in children; deadline for the opinion February 2008
    - Priority given to the 6 colours used in the UK study
    - WG created including behavioral specialists

Aluminium

- After evaluation JECFA has lowered the provisional tolerable weekly intake (PTWI) for aluminium by factor 7
- EFSA to **evaluate aluminium from <u>all sources</u>** of dietary intake on request of the Commission
- Opinion expected in November 2007
- Media interest → communications foreseen

Aspartame

- 2nd study on aspartame published by the European Ramazzini Foundation (ERF) in June in a peer-reviewed journal
- EFSA urged the ERF to provide the data needed for an evaluation, but until now no data were submitted
- FDA US also requested the full set of data from the ERF

Neotame

- Intended for use as a sweetener and flavour enhancer
- Over 30 times sweeter than aspartame and 7000 to 13000 times sweeter than sucrose
- Already approved for use as a food additive in a number of countries e.g. USA, Australia, New Zealand, Mexico…
- EFSA's AFC Panel has evaluated the **safety of neotame as a sweetener and flavour enhancer**
- Opinion adopted in September 2007, to be published shortly
- Scientific advice to the Commission when deciding on its authorisation for use in foods

Taurine and D-Glucoronolactone

- Opinion issued by the Scientific Committee on Food (SCF) in 1999, but further studies were requested
- Manufacturer provided **new data on the safety-in-use** of taurine and d-glucoronolactone in “energy drinks” in April
- EFSA was asked by the Commission to review the data submitted and, if appropriate, provide a scientific opinion
- Information received was not sufficient and the manufacturer was asked to submit more data
- Opinion expected by summer 2008

Acrylamide (AA)

- A number of heated foods contain significant levels of acrylamide
- AA considered to be **carcinogenic and genotoxic** (JECFA, WHO, SCF and EFSA)
- Many efforts made by industry to reduce the level of acrylamide in prepared foods; training and information for consumers provided by national authorities of Member States
- HEATOX project finalised; publication expected shortly

Nitrate in vegetables

- Risk assessment to provide the scientific basis for a longer-term strategy for managing the risk from nitrate in vegetables
- Assessment includes a **risk-benefit approach** by taking also into account benefits of eating vegetables
- Maximum Levels for nitrate in lettuce and spinach are set in EU legislation, but implications for food safety from nitrate in other vegetables (e.g. rocket) unclear
- Opinion expected to be finalised in Nov/Dec 2007

Marine biotoxines in shellfish

- EFSA asked to assess the current EU limits for 8 marine biotoxines with regard to
  1. **Human health** and
  2. **The methods of analysis** for marine biotoxins as established in EU legislation
  3. **New emerging marine biotoxins**

- First 2 opinions for adoption in November

Nutrition and Health Claims

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EFSA'S TASKS

1. **Guidance for preparation and presentation of applications for authorisation of health claims**
   - Guidance document published in July 2007, following public consultation and meeting with stakeholders

2. **EFSA's opinion on individual applications**
   - EFSA to verify scientific substantiation of health claims
   - EFSA to consider the wording of a health claims
   -> First applications received (under Art 14)

3. **Nutritional Profiles**
   - EFSA opinion on nutrient profiles expected in January 2008
   - Scientific Colloquium on nutrient profiles held in Parma on 11-12 Oct

4. **List of permitted health claims** (Art 13)
   - EFSA to be consulted on list of "function claims" used in EU Member States

Population Reference Intakes (PRIs)

EFSA got a mandate from the Commission to review the report provided in 1992 by the Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) on nutrient and energy intakes for the European Community taking into account other scientific advice provided by MS, WHO, USA etc

<u>Focus on 3 key areas:</u>

1. PRIs for energy and **macronutrients**: protein, fats (including saturated, polyunsaturated, monounsaturated, and trans fatty acids), carbohydrates, and dietary fibre to be finalised beginning of 2008
2. PRIs for **micronutrients** e.g. vitamins, minerals
3. **Guidance** on translation of nutrient-based recommendations into food-based recommendations

GMO –Risk Assessment

- EFSA asked to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of 90-day rat feeding trial for the safety evaluation of a food crop – self task
- Some MS asked to include feeding trials as part of the standard procedure for evaluation of GM crops
- Special meeting of the EFSA AF on GMO risk assessment in Europe - 13 November, Brussels
- Opinion expected to be published during November

Annual zoonoses report 2006

- Analyses of the annual EU data on zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance and foodborne outbreaks
- The report covers: salmonella, toxoplasma, campylobacter, etc.
- Publication and possible press briefing in Brussels at the beginning of December 2007

Reptile meat

- EFSA asked to examine public health risks involved in the human consumption of reptile meat
- The opinion will cover:

- Risks associated with viruses, prions, bacteria, fungi, parasites (BIOHAZ)
- Risks associated with chemical substances: residues of veterinary drugs, hormones, heavy metals (CONTAM)
- Publication by the end of 2007

Meat and Bone Meal (MBM)

- EFSA to examine risks related to BSE of feeding non-ruminants MBM to non-ruminants
- Possible lifting of certain measures related to feeding MBM to farm animals

  e.g. if poultry MBM can be fed to pigs and if pigs MBM can be fed to poultry
- Opinion to be adopted in October

Welfare aspects of killing and skinning of seals

- EFSA to examine if the currently used methods could be considered as humane
- EFSA met with stakeholders on 4th October to discuss work in progress

  - 40 organizations from 11 countries participated

  - news story published on EFSA website
- Opinion will be ready for consideration by the AHAW Panel in December 2007

Fish welfare

- AHAW Panel to review scientific knowledge on fish welfare issues for all major commercially farmed species in the EU
- Fish species to be examined
  1. Atlantic salmon,
  2. Seabream, Sea bass
  3. Trout
  4. Carp
  5. European eel
- Health and food safety issues also considered, such as antibiotic resistance and vaccination
- All five opinions to be finalised by mid 2008

Pig welfare

- Animal health and welfare aspects of different housing and husbandry systems for farming pigs.
- Mandate divided into three questions

1. Fattening pigs
2. Sows and boars
3. Tail biting

- The first opinion (fattening pigs) to be published in October

Animal cloning

- EFSA received **mandate** from the Commission in April 2007
  - 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 focus on the **scientific risk assessment** /European Group of Ethics to provide an opinion on ethical aspects of cloning
- Working group established under the EFSA Scientific Committee (SC)
- **Draft opinion** likely to be endorsed in November by the SC and **published for consultation**, consultations with Member States and stakeholders planned
- Finalisation, adoption and publication of the opinion by spring 2008
- US FDA report on cloning expected shortly

Nanotechnology

- In June EFSA received a mandate to assess risks arising from **nanotechnology and nanoscience**
- Focus on food and feed safety
- Scientific Committee leading on the issue
- Opinion expected by summer 2008
- In addition, **2 questions for applications** received:
  1. Safety evaluation of titanium nitride based on nanoparticles to be used as food contact material additive
  2. Evaluation of the safety of silicon dioxine coating of PET articles

Communications – other issues

- **New website** launched at the beginning of September

- **EFSA's 5th anniversary**
  - Brussels week 19 – 22 November 2007

EFSA's new website



Brussels week 19-22 Nov



19-22 Nov — **EFSA Exhibition European Parliament**

20-21 Nov — **EFSA Scientific Forum**

22 Nov — **European Food Safety Summit**

Media relations activities

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR ATTENTION!