

Thursday, 05 March 2020

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS
AND PROCESSES**

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY
SEVENTH MEETING HELD ON
10TH JULY 2019**

ACNFP Secretariat
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MINUTES OF THE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVENTH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES, HELD ON 10th JULY 2019 THE GROSVENOR, 101 BUCKINGHAM PALACE ROAD, VICTORIA, LONDON, SW1W 0SJ

Present	Professor Peter Gregory	Chairman
	Dr Anton Alldrick Dr Camilla Alexander-White Dr Hamid Ghoddusi Dr Lesley Stanley Dr Mark Berry Dr Maureen Wakefield Dr Rohini Manuel Mrs Rebecca McKenzie Ms Claire Nicholson Ms Nichola Lund Professor Clare Mills Professor Huw Jones Professor John Mathers Professor Michael Bushell Professor Paul Fraser Professor Susan Duthie	
Apologies	Professor Christopher Ritson Professor Harry McArdle Professor Wendy Harwood	
Assessor	Mr Paul Tossell (by teleconference)	
Observer	Ms Alison Asquith Dr Sabrina Roberts Mr Mark Bond	
Secretariat	Ms Ruth Willis Ms Erin Oliver Mr Richard Uchotski Dr Elspeth Ransom Mr Francisco Matilla-Garcia	Technical Secretary Lead Secretariat Secretariat Secretariat Secretariat

Members are required to declare any personal interest in matters under discussion. Where Members have a particularly close association with any item, the Chairman will limit their involvement in the discussion. In cases where an item is to be discussed in their absence, a Member may make a statement before leaving.

1. Apologies and announcements

Apologies for non-attendance were received from three members, comments were received from one member.

Apologies were also received from the Observers from N. Ireland, FSA Wales, and Food Standards Scotland (FSS).

The Chair welcomed representatives from the FSA, Mark Bond, Sabrina Roberts, and Alison Asquith to observe the meeting.

The ACNFP welcomed Dr Mark Berry, Professor Wendy Harwood, Dr Maureen Wakefield, Professor Paul Fraser and Professor Huw Jones to the ACNFP. They will be serving as new members. The ACNFP also welcomed back Professor Clare Mills and Professor Harry McArdle, who had previously served on the Committee, in a different capacity.

The Chairman reminded Members of the need to announce any commercial interests in the business of the Committee, prior to the discussions on each item.

2. Minutes of the 136th Meeting

ACNFP/137/Min

The Committee agreed that the minutes, were a true record of the 136th meeting of the ACNFP held on 7 May 2019, subject to minor amendments.

3. Matters Arising

The Secretary reported confirmed that the summaries of the traditional foods that were considered previously by the Committee under the traditional food process, fonio, haskaps and sorghum, were updated with Members comments and will be published on the ACNFP website shortly.

The views of members on the moringa traditional food notification considered in May had been summarised and been subject to a 10-day public consultation. As no public comments were received the draft unchanged, was finalised and sent to the FSA Risk Management team to inform the UK position.

The corrections and updates to the Annual report have been completed, and it's been uploaded to the ACNFP website.

4. Maqui (*Aristotelia chilensis*)

ACNFP/137/01

The Committee considered a notification dossier for traditional food, for maqui in several processed forms. The applicant is seeking authorisation for use as a concentrated fruit juice, freeze dried powder and powder dried using radiant energy vacuum (REV) drying. The applicant intends to market maqui in its three forms for use in food categories including: edible ices; confectionary; cereals and cereal products; beverages and ready-to-eat savouries and snacks.

The Committee commented that while it was useful to have a wide range of information presented, the dossier lacked accessibility and coherence. This made evaluating the information provided for safety assessment difficult. It was noted that many of the resources provided were irrelevant to the safety assessment and made accessing key information harder.

Members expressed concerns over the inconsistencies in the data particularly the microbiological analysis and suggested that the presence of compounds such as vitamin D3 would be unlikely to be present in the products as described. This caused the Committee to question the robustness and validity of the data for assessment, and the proficiency of laboratories undertaking the analytical testing.

The Committee raised concerns around the compositional data. They commented that the product is wild harvested and from the data presented the natural variability was difficult to understand. Similarly, the Committee noted the specifications were unclear and that microbiological and heavy metal contaminant limits were not provided for all products. There had also been no consideration of mycotoxins.

Member's raised concerns over the impact of the high level of polyphenols such as flavonoids in the product. Flavonoids would become more concentrated in the proposed forms. It is known that high levels of polyphenols can interfere with calcium and iron absorption and interact with glucose receptors in the gut. The Committee suggested that more consideration should be given on to the biological impact of the

flavonoids and other bioactive compounds present in the berries in the body. The Committee suggested that it would be important to explore the contribution the berries would make to the wider diet if consumed in the EU. This could then have been compared to EFSA opinions considering levels of dietary exposure to polyphenols from the diet that are considered safe.

The Committee observed that information provided on intake was based on a proxy of polyphenol content rather than intake of the actual products. This made it difficult to understand the likely exposure of consumers and how this related to any risks identified.

Member's commented on the production processes, highlighting that testing for a residual concentration of the chemicals employed for sterilisation was needed to inform the assessment. As the applicant did not check for a residual concentration, it is unknown whether it was effective, raising a safety concern around the sterilisation. This would be important to ensure no chemical contamination and to provide confidence in the effectiveness of this step. The Committee also noticed gaps in the information provided about the Radiant Energy Vacuum process used in the production and how this might impact on the nature of the product.

The Committee commented that evidence for the 25 years consumption of the berries and the plants leaves had been presented. However, the product under consideration is a concentrated powder and this could change the nature of the risks. It was therefore raised with Risk Managers whether the product could be considered as traditional.

Members expressed concern over the nutritional safety of the product. The Committee also commented that there were unexpectedly high sodium levels in the concentrated juice. It was also noted that the potassium levels, could pose cardiac issues in some groups and should be explored further. The Committee also questioned why it was advised that suffers of Phenylketonuria should avoid this product as it is a low protein food and there is no evidence that it contains high levels of phenylalanine.

In assessing the potential allergenicity of the product it was commented by Members that while no food allergies were reported for this species, consumption of seeds in the powdered product, might constitute a future risk if consumers become sensitised, as found in other fruit-based products.

Action: The Secretariat will summarise the views of the Committee and put the opinion out for a 10-day public consultation.

5. Cacao Pulp NF 2019/1014

ACNFP/137/2

Dr Mark Berry declared a potential conflict of interest for this notification as in a previous role he had worked with the applicant company on other projects. It was agreed with Committee Members that any comments he raised in the discussion would be considered in this context.

The Committee considered a notification dossier for traditional food *Theobroma cacao* L, for authorisation of cacao fruit pulp a white flesh that surrounds the seeds. The applicant intends to market the product as a fruit juice, to be consumed as such (juice and pulp), with added water (juice, concentrate, pulp) or as ingredient in foods (mainly concentrate).

The Committee made general comments on the dossier, including that the dossier contained a very large amount of information, part of which was deemed to be insufficiently relevant for the focus of the authorisation. This made accessing the information needed for the assessment difficult. It was noted that some of the data appeared inconsistent and for other data the variability had not been explained by the applicant.

Members commended the notification for the collation of the raw data and that the applicant had actively sought and identified potential problems and addressed them.

The Committee raised the point that given the nature of the product it would have been useful to consider further the potential for phytotoxins to be produced. Members noted that a sequence for a toxin could be identified in the publicly available genome sequence for cocoa and therefore it would have been appropriate to check for this. It was also suggested that given the potential for growth of molds, that a screen for mycotoxins would be appropriate. The high levels of polyphenols and the potential for phytocompounds to be converted into a-glycosides was also raised an issue that the applicant should consider further.

The Committee were satisfied that a 25-year history of consumption for the juice, concentrate and the pulp had been demonstrated. However, the question was raised for risk managers on whether the changing of the production process to employ modern production methods would be consistent with seeking authorisation under the terms of the traditional food from third country route. This would inform the approach to the assessment of the production process.

The Committee reflected that this industrialisation of the process and application of HACCP protocols across the production process might better ensure the safety of the product. Members suggested it would have been clearer if a comparison could have been made between the composition of the product produced by the traditional processes versus the proposed production method.

Members commented on the microbiological analysis suggesting that given the low pH 3.2 further consideration should be given to the potential for growth of yeast. This had implications for the stability evaluation which had been based on data at the time of production. It was suggested that the analysis would be more robust if sampling had been done on the product sometime after production to understand the impact of mould growth post pasteurisation.

The Committee had significant concerns over the proposed use of the fruit juice. The Committee commented that the product could be nutritionally disadvantageous if consumed as a replacement for fruit juices by certain subgroups of the population, such as children, due to the low vitamin and high sugar content of the product. It was suggested that the nature of the product is not consistent with the type of product associated with a fruit juice by the EU population. No concerns were found with the use of the food if it is to be used a substitute for sugar or as a sweetener.

Action: The Secretariat will draft a summary of the Committee comments and put the opinion out for a 10-day public consultation.

The Committee considered a second notification for traditional food *Theobroma cacao* L, for authorisation of cacao fruit pulp, submitted by Nestec York Ltd. The applicant is seeking authorisation to use cocoa fruit pulp in the traditional way as occurs in South America in the food categories: frozen fruit; fruit and vegetable preparations; jam jellies and marmalades; confectionery; fruit juices.

The Committee provided general comments on the notification. They commended the dossier for being succinct, clear and accessible. Praise was given for the literature review and that the applicant described the literature search strategy.

In relation to the specifications Members raised concerns that other than ochratoxin A other mycotoxins had had not been considered. The Committee suggested that a wider range of resources could have been employed to consider the potential of phytotoxins being present.

Members raised the same point as discussed in the previous item in relation to the significant change to the production process from that used traditionally. The Committee reflected that this industrialisation of the process and application of HACCP protocols across the production process might better ensure the safety of the product. Members suggested it would have been clearer if a comparison could have been made between the composition of the product produced by the traditional processes versus the proposed production method.

As with the previous application it was questioned whether changing of the production process to employ modern production methods would be consistent with seeking authorisation under the terms of the traditional food from third country route. This issue should be raised with risk managers to inform future assessments. Concerns were also raised with this application that the stability of the traditional food over time had not been considered in enough depth.

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Action: The Secretariat will draft a summary of the Committee comments and put the opinion out for a 10-day public consultation.

SACS Ways of Working Update

ACNFP/137/04

The Secretary flagged the changes that have been made to managing interests i.e. declaring personal and professional conflicts of interest. It was noted that information on interests of the previous 5-years would be recorded. A draft document capturing members' interests had been circulated to the Committee for review.

Action: For members to provide any updates to their interests to ensure the document remains up to date.

8. For Information

12.1 Update on Novel Foods and GM Policy Teams

Oral

The Committee noted the oral briefing.

12.2 SACS Update

The Committee noted the update on the work of the other FSA Scientific Advisory Committees.

Any other Business

The Secretariat raised that positive feedback had been received for the Committee's involvement in the discovery day. The FSA found the SAC's input very useful and thanked the ACNFP for its input.

Members discussed the need for better tools to facilitate information sharing. The Secretariat agreed to explore what options are available.

Action: The Secretariat will review the working practices to expedite and information sharing between the Secretariat and the Committee.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for 11th September 2019. The venue will be confirmed.