ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTEENTH MEETING HELD ON 16 APRIL 2014

ACNFP Secretariat
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These Minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its next meeting.
MINUTES OF THE HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES, HELD ON 16 APRIL 2014 IN CONFERENCE ROOM 5 AVIATION HOUSE.

Present
Professor Peter Gregory – Chairman
Professor Michael Bushell
Dr Susan Duthie
Professor Harry McArdle
Professor George Macfarlane
Dr Rohini Manuel
Professor Clare Mills
Ms Claire Nicholson

Apologies
Mr Simon Flanagan
Mrs Nichola Lund
Professor John Mathers
Professor Peter Meyer
Dr Camilla Pease
Professor Christopher Ritson
Dr Carina Venter

FSA Advisor
Mr Terry Donohoe

Secretariat
Ms Alison Asquith – Minutes
Dr Sandy Lawrie – ACNFP Secretary
Dr Manisha Upadhyay

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

Seven members had sent apologies for non-attendance. Written comments were received from six of these members before the meeting. Apologies were received from the observers from the FSA offices in Scotland, Wales and N.Ireland.

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 114th meeting

The Committee agreed that subject to minor amendments the minutes were a true record of the 114th meeting of the ACNFP held on Wednesday 12 February 2014.

3. Matters Arising and Postal Consultations

The Secretariat reported back on actions taken on the following items, which had been discussed at the previous meeting:

**Resveratrol (item 7):** based on the Committee’s advice, the UK’s objections to this novel ingredient were withdrawn.

**Cycloastragenol (item 8):** the Secretariat has written to the applicant and is awaiting their response.

4. Sporopollenin Shells

The Committee considered a draft opinion on this novel ingredient, following its review of the applicant’s response to various questions and concerns that had been raised at its meetings in February 2013, November 2013 and February 2014.

While most of these had been addressed satisfactorily, the Committee questioned how much control industry had over the formulations of materials carried in the shells, and how they would manage any differences in bioavailability.

The Committee agreed the draft opinion subject to amendments, but questioned whether companies who might use the new ingredient as a carrier for vitamins (etc) would routinely check its effect on bioavailability of the active substances.

*Action: Secretariat to revise the draft opinion, which will be cleared by Chair’s action prior to a 10 day public consultation.*
5. Beta-Hydroxybutyrate ester (Ketone Ester)  ACNFP 115/3

The Committee reviewed the applicant’s response to concerns raised at its meetings in September and November 2013 and in February 2014. The Committee confirmed that it had considered all the data and arguments provided by the applicant and that its major concerns had not been addressed. These were the safety of the novel food, and how the product would be used if authorised under the Novel Foods Regulations.

The Committee was concerned that the applicant had provided insufficient evidence that the novel ingredient was safe when consumed by the target group of elite athletes as this was likely to include adolescents. It noted that “elite” athletes would already be very well-nourished and the aim of this product was to supply “extra energy” as a ketone on top of an excellent supply of energy via the normal route of glucose and fatty acids from the diet. This situation was different from using ketones as an energy source during starvation, and the applicant had not addressed its concerns about the impact on normal physiology when consumed by a well nourished person. It noted there was no information on the novel foods long term use and requested further studies to address its concerns.

The Committee remained concerned that, if the novel ingredient were authorised, and marketed to the target group of elite athletes, products might nevertheless easily be obtained by non target groups. It sought information on how the novel food would be labelled and marketed to discourage consumption by non target groups.

The Committee discussed the applicant’s request for a meeting with Committee members. It emphasised that decisions are made by the whole Committee rather than by subgroups. Noting the expectation that it will operate in an open and transparent manner, and that the information on which the Committee makes its decisions will be published, it would not be appropriate to engage with applicants in a private forum. If applicants wished to engage with the Committee, they could do so at its open meeting.

*Action: The Secretariat to reply to the applicant.*

6. Chia Seeds (Andean Grain Products)  ACNFP/115/4

The Committee was asked whether it agreed that substantial equivalence had been established between chia seeds produced by Andean Grain Products Ltd and chia seeds currently marketed by The Chia Company.

The Committee considered the applicant had provided a very clear dossier with sufficient information to demonstrate that its chia seeds are equivalent to those marketed by the Chia Company.
7. **Bread enriched with Vitamin D through treatment with ultraviolet light.**

The Committee reviewed the favourable initial opinion of the Finnish Competent Authority on an application for the authorisation of treating bread with ultraviolet light for the sole purpose of increasing its vitamin D content.

The Committee noted that the breads cited in the application were crispbreads and rye breads which are widely consumed in Nordic countries and not the main types of bread consumed in the UK. The Committee considered that ultraviolet light could penetrate thin products, such as tortillas and flatbreads, and the effect of treatment would be greater than with large loaves. It was satisfied that the treatment would not have a significant effect on the folate content if bread was also enriched with folic acid.

The Committee agreed with the Finnish Competent Authority’s opinion for crispbreads and rye breads and sought further data for breads widely consumed in the UK.

*Action: The Committee’s comments will form the basis of the UK’s formal response to the Finnish initial opinion.*

8. **GM Research**

The Committee considered the draft report of a GM research workshop that had been held by the FSA in March 2014, and members discussed possible future research on topics that would enhance the risk assessment of food derived from GMOs.

The Committee considered that the workshop had been useful and it agreed with the workshop’s conclusion that there are currently no major gaps in the methodologies to assess potential risks of GMOs or any crops. It also agreed with the conclusion that there was a need to build and maintain databases related to allergenic and toxic components and that this required resources at international level.

The Committee made the following suggestions for future research topics: epigenetics in GM plants; micro RNAs in plants; modelling to help predict which proteins may be allergenic.

*Action: Secretariat to pass the Committee’s suggestions to the FSA.*
9. Items for Information.

9.1 EU Update  
ACFNP/115/9

9.2 Update on Scientific Advisory Committees (SACs)  
ACNFP/115/10

9.3 Security Markings  
ACNFP/115/11

The Committee noted items 9.1 and 9.3 without comment.

Under item 9.2 the Chair updated the Committee on a meeting he attended with the Government Chief Scientific Adviser, Chief Scientific Advisers in Government Departments and Chairs of Scientific Advisory Committees.

10. Any Other Business

The Committee was informed of the appointment of Professor Guy Poppy as the FSA’s Chief Scientific Adviser, with effect from August 2014.

The Committee was informed of possible topics to be discussed at the next ACNFP members’ workshop.

The Secretariat reported that two items that were postponed from the agenda of this meeting (D-Ribose and Traditional Foods) would be discussed at the next meeting.

11. Date of next meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday 26 June in Aviation House.