

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON NOVEL FOODS AND PROCESSES

SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEES UPDATE

This paper provides Members with an update on the work of the Food Standard Agency's Scientific Advisory Committees and other items of general interest to the advisory committees.

Advisory Committee on Animal Feedingstuffs (ACAF)

The next ACAF meeting is scheduled to take place in Aviation House on 26 February 2014. Agenda items include

- **Work of FEEDAP:** A presentation from the vice Chairman of the EFSA Panel on Additives and Products or Substances used in Animal Feed (FEEDAP) on the work of this EFSA Panel including the methodology it adopts when providing an opinion.
- **Development of new 'super' wheat breed:** A presentation from Dr Phil Howells of NIAB on work being undertaken to develop a new type of wheat which could increase productivity by 30% offering greater yields.
- **United Kingdom Former Foodstuff Processor Association:** A short update from a representative of the Agricultural Industries Confederation on the newly formed United Kingdom Former Foodstuff Processor Association.

ACAF is in the process of recruiting 2 new members to the Committee. One post requires a knowledge and experience in the animal feed industry ideally in the feed additive and/or feed supplement industries, the second post requires knowledge and experience in veterinary science.

Advisory Committee on Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

The ACMSF met on 30 January and discussions included the following topics:

- **Update on viruses in the food chain:** Prof Sarah O'Brien presented the draft final report of the work of the Ad Hoc Group on Foodborne Viral Infections.
- **Listeriosis in England and Wales:** Public Health England updated the Committee on the incidence of Listeriosis in England and Wales.
- **Relative risk ranking of ready-to-eat foods for vulnerable groups:** The Committee was asked to comment on the FSA's risk ranking work on ready-to-eat foods for vulnerable groups in relation to Listeria.
- **Street Spice outbreak:** Public Health England presented the findings from the Street Spice curry leaves outbreak investigation.

ACMSF is in the process of recruiting 2 new members to the Committee. One post requires knowledge and expertise in assessing the microbiological risks associated with food

processing, the second requires veterinarian with a knowledge and expertise in veterinary public health.

Committee on Toxicity (COT)

COT met on 4 February and included discussions on the following topics:

- **SACN Review of vitamin D: Adverse effects of high levels:** These two papers are part of a series of papers on the potential adverse effects of high intakes of vitamin D, leading to formulation of advice on tolerable upper intake levels:
 - a) Adverse effects of single high doses of vitamin
 - b) Draft COT conclusions on a tolerable upper level for vitamin D.
- **Second draft statement on the potential risks from perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS)** in the infant diet. The COT has been asked to consider aspects related to the toxicity of chemicals in the infant diet, in support of a review by the Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN) of Government recommendations on complementary and young child feeding. This draft COT statement summarises the available information and the Committee's provisional conclusions on PFOS
- **Potential future discussion items** – horizon scanning. COT members have agreed that it would be useful to have an annual agenda item to discuss potential future topics. This paper lists ongoing and planned topics of discussion and invites members to give their opinions on emerging toxicological issues that may be of relevance to public health or to Committee working procedures, which could be included in the Committee's programme of work in 2014

The next meeting of COT is scheduled to be held on 18 March 2014.

General Advisory Committee on Science (GACS)

The next GACS meeting will be held on 19th March 2014. It will be preceded by the GACS annual spring dinner on 18th March. Provisional agenda items for the meeting include:

- Report on Science in the FSA
- Science in the SACs - update on SAC activities
- FSA evidence portfolio
- Report from Working Group on Data Exploitation
- Report from Working Group on Use of Science in Emergencies
- Report from new Working Group on Use of Evidence (weighting of evidence)
- Presentation from global food security initiative champion Tim Benton (*to be confirmed*)

The final agenda and papers for the meeting will be published up to 2 weeks in advance on the GACS website.

The autumn GACS meeting is scheduled for 29 October 2014.

Social Science Research Committee (SSRC)

The SSRC has made recommendations about the Agency's future quantitative data needs. These are available at: <http://multimedia.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/committee/recommendation>

Members of the SSRC also continued to advise the Agency on key pieces of social science research:

- **SSG** – the Strategy Sub Group (SSG) had their second meeting on 12 December 2013. Key discussion items included a paper on risk/ benefit perception and the review of the FSA Science Governance Framework.
- **Domestic Kitchen practices:** This work is now complete and the report is available at http://www.foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f_category_id=&f_report_id=818 . The research team are currently drafting academic publications.
- **Food and You** - Fieldwork for Wave 3 of Food and You has been commissioned and will take place from April – August. The first report will be published in October. Two projects on secondary analysis of Food and You Wave 1 and Wave 2 data are also underway: one reviewing the index of recommended practice and conducting secondary analysis of the data; the second considering the relationships between food safety and nutrition.

The next SSRC meeting will be held on the 20th March 2014, in Aviation House. This will be an open meeting, and the agenda and papers will be published on the website nearer the time of the meeting.

**Secretariat
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