



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD ON 16 FEBRUARY 2009 IN BRUSSELS
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)**

Chairman: K. Van Dyck

All the Member States were present, except Luxemburg.

- 1. Discussion of and possible consensus on the review of the Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs (SANCO/1731/2008 Rev. 7) (see point 1 of the 16 December 2008 SCFCAH)**
- 2. Discussion of and possible consensus on the review of the Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin (SANCO/1732/2008 Rev 7) (see point 2 of the 16 December 2008 SCFCAH)**

The Commission provided explanation on the latest changes made to these guidance documents requested by the Legal service, which were mainly linguistic and drafting changes.

A general consensus was reached on the both guidance documents.

- 3. Discussion on a Guide of Good Hygiene Practice for the Prevention and Control of Microbiological Infections focussed on Salmonella control of chickens reared for meat (KDS/BJ)**

This guide has been developed jointly by AVEC and COPA-COGECA. AVEC. is the association of poultry processors and poultry trade in the EU¹ and COPA-COGECA are the Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the EU and the General Confederation of Agricultural Co-operatives in the EU².

The document is elaborated according to article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuff. It aims at providing guidance to effective application of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the control of *Salmonella* and other specified food-borne zoonotic agents. It should assist producers in implementing hygiene measures in order to manage the microbiological quality of the live poultry and the poultry meat.

¹ <http://www.avec-poultry.eu/sw153.asp>

² <http://www.copa-cogeca.be/Main.aspx?page=HomePage>

The guide has been discussed several times at working group meetings. All comments have been sent to the associations for consideration. Comments on Part C will be brought forward at a working group meeting in March.

Member States were requested to send in their final comments as soon as possible, which will be forwarded to the stakeholders.

4. Discussion on a Community Guide for Good Hygiene Practices in pullet rearing and egg laying flocks (KDS)

This guide has been drafted jointly by COPA-COGECA and EUWEP³ in accordance with article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the hygiene of foodstuff. It is mainly directed at pullet rearing and egg laying flocks and it aims at providing guidance to effective application of Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the control of *Salmonella* and other specified food-borne zoonotic agents.

Member States were requested to send in their final comments, which will be forwarded to the stakeholders for consideration.

5. State of play on heat decontamination techniques (TG)

The Commission informed the Committee of its intention to place a statement on heat decontamination techniques in the minutes of this Committee meeting.

It indicated that further examination of the documentation provided on hot water decontamination, including consultation of the European Food Safety Authority, would be necessary.

Finland agreed with the statement but requested that the statement be submitted to the procedure set out under Articles 3 and 12 of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004.

A consensus was finally reached on the statement attached in the Annex.

6. State of play Salmonella in peanut butter in USA (AH/JLDF)

The Commission's representative gave a presentation on the state of play of the "Salmonella Typhimurium outbreak in USA caused by Peanut-Containing Products". The outbreak was first detected on 10 November 2008 through the CDC PulseNet⁴. It has spread quite broadly and it is ongoing though the number of cases has declined since December 2008. The case count on 16/02/2009 amounts to 637 in 44 States in USA and in Canada. Nine deaths are contributed to the outbreak, all of persons aged 59 or more. Epidemiological analysis and laboratory testing enabled the US Food and Drug Administration to confirm that the outbreak originates from peanut butter and peanut paste produced by the Peanut Corporation of America at its processing plant of Blakely, Georgia.

The Committee was provided with an overview of previous outbreaks linked to peanut butter notified in the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed, as well as of all RASFF notifications received relating to the current outbreak.

7. Information on the "Better Training for Safer Food" programme 2009-2010

³ EUWEP is the EU trade association for egg packers, egg traders and egg processors, www.euwep.info
⁴ <http://www.cdc.gov/PULSENET/>

The "Better Training for Safer Food" programme (BTSF) started in 2005-2006 as provided for by Regulation (EC) N° 882/2004 on official controls performed to ensure the verification of compliance with feed and food law, animal health and animal welfare rules. The training covers the areas of food law, feed law, animal health rules, animal welfare rules and plant health rules. It is, in the long term, estimated to reach an annual average of 6,000 participants for a budget of €15 million (around 2011-12). BTSF can be distinguished in two parts: EU training programmes and third country training programmes.

The Commission representative drew the attention of the Committee to the training activities in 2009-2010 deriving from the Africa-EU Joint Strategy.

He also outlined the results of the intermediate evaluation of the 2006-2007 BTSF activities. Around 3000 participants were surveyed about the quality, the impact and the dissemination of the training provided. Their opinion was broadly positive.

It has been decided to outsource the management of BTSF to the Executive Agency for Health and Consumers. Competences, mostly administrative and financial, should be transferred gradually during 2009. The Commission will keep its policy and guidance role.

8. Information on listing of EU approved establishments (TC)

In order to assist Member States in making available to other Member States and to the public up-to-date lists of approved food establishments the Commission has created a webpage⁵ providing a central access to the lists of establishments in Member States and certain other countries. Technical specifications with a view to harmonise and codify the presentation of such lists were approved at the end of 2005.

Nevertheless the Commission has received many complaints on different aspects of the central webpage: presentation, codes, weblinks, outdated information... After verification, it was noticed that few Member States follow the technical specifications and that some national weblinks were not functional. Member States were requested to update their lists accordingly, and to transmit a contact point (name or mailbox address) which would be responsible for updating the list.

Miscellaneous

- The Czech Republic is drafting national measures with regard to **crocodile meat** and asked the Commission whether Community measures will be proposed in the near future. The Commission clearly stated its intention to propose harmonised conditions and will bring the subject forward at working group level.

- The Slovak Republic asked whether the **accreditation of laboratories for official control for *Trichinella*** could be extended to December 2012. The Commission sent a letter to the Chief Veterinary Officers in November 2008 asking for the state of play in each Member States. Their replies will be assessed and MS will be informed of the outcome.

ANNEX

DRAFT COMMISSION STATEMENT

STEAM DECONTAMINATION TECHNIQUE

Regulations (EC) No 852/2004 and (EC) No 853/2004 do not contain any legal provisions preventing the general use of potable water, as defined in Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption, in any of its physical forms.

The Commission considers that the use of steam to remove surface contamination on carcasses may be allowed provided that:

- the water used for the steam production is potable, as laid down in Article 3(2) of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004;
- the steam application does not result in any irreversible discolouration of the meat; and
- all the relevant requirements of Regulations (EC) No 852/2004, (EC) No 853/2004 and (EC) No 854/2004 for the production of fresh meat are respected. The Scientific Committee on Veterinary measures to Public Health in its opinion on 14 and 15 April 2003 on “the evaluation of antimicrobial treatments for poultry carcasses” concluded that decontamination can constitute a useful element in further reducing the number of pathogens provided that an integrated control strategy is applied throughout the entire food chain, including hygienic measures applied at primary production, during transport and in the slaughter and processing plant.
- in relation to Article 5 of Regulation 852/2004 when steam decontamination is used, it shall be considered as a Critical Control Point in the HACCP plan.

HOT WATER DECONTAMINATION TECHNIQUE

The issue of hot water decontamination will need further investigation with the Member States before taking any official position on the matter.

Reminder

It should be remembered that the use of substances other than potable water for the removal of surface contamination (antimicrobial treatments) in the production of meat is not permitted under EU law.