



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

HEALTH & CONSUMERS DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH  
HELD ON 16 MARCH 2010 IN BRUSSELS  
(Section: Biological Safety of the Food Chain)**

Chairman: K. Van Dyck

All the Member States were represented.

**1. Food irradiation: missing contributions from some Member States for the annual report of the Year 2008**

Following a reminder, the Commission received all but one of the contributions required. Consequently, the Annual Report of the Year 2008 will be finalised and presented very soon. The Commission requested submission of the remaining data as soon as possible.

**2. NON PAPER on the implementation of microbiological criteria to infant formulae, follow-on formulae and baby food**

The Commission explained that the non paper had been provided because it had been asked to clarify the interpretation of the Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs regarding food safety criteria for baby food. The main purpose of this non paper is, on the one hand, to clarify the definitions of three types of baby food and, on the other hand, to stress that food safety criteria apply only for dried infant formula and dried dietary foods for special medical purposes intended for infants below six months of age. Some minor typing errors were pointed out, and it was agreed that these would be corrected. The new version of the document, as well as an associated Guidance Document on official controls, under Regulation (EC) No 882/2004, concerning microbiological sampling and testing of foodstuffs were distributed to Member States.

**3. Discussion and possible endorsement of a Community Guide for Good Hygiene Practice in broiler production developed by COPA-COGECA and AVEC**

Member States received a new revision of the Guide to Good Hygiene Practice for the Prevention and Control of Pathogenic Microorganisms with particular Reference to Salmonella in Gallus gallus (Broilers) reared for meat — on farms, and during catching, loading and transport. Since the last SCFCAH meeting, the Commission had received some comments from stakeholders, most of them editorial. The Commission explained the comments in detail. The Standing Committee unanimously endorsed the Community Guide. The Commission said the document would be translated into all languages.

#### **4. Information from Poland on norovirus in raspberries (follow-up since the last committee)**

With reference to notifications made to RASFF in 2009 by the Finnish Food Safety Authority concerning food poisoning probably caused by norovirus infection associated with the consumption of raspberries imported from Poland, a Polish representative submitted information on measures the Polish authorities had taken in response. Furthermore, the Member States and Commission were informed that Polish experts will shortly develop a guide including instructions to be followed while growing raspberries and in processing, so as to avoid the risk of norovirus contamination in raspberries grown in Poland. The guide will be provided to all official food control authorities and will be distributed among operators. The Finnish representative thanked the Commission for taking this point, and provided Member States with detailed information regarding the outbreak of the norovirus in Finland.

#### **4A. Discussion and possible agreement on a request from the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) to use baseline survey data in EFSA Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment (QMRA) Salmonella in pigs. Papers for publication.**

The Commission provided Member States with background information on the Veterinary Laboratories Agency's request. Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) completed the EFSA Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment (QMRA) for Salmonella in pigs, and the EFSA scientific opinion is due for publication shortly. Now VLA is in the process of writing scientific papers intended for publication in scientific journals, an important part of communication on QMRA. In these papers, VLA would like to identify four case study Member States and to use baseline survey data in EFSA Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment on Salmonella in pigs. Member States agreed to the request. However, they stipulated that the exercise should remain anonymous.

#### **4B. Request of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) on the molecular testing of Salmonella Goldcoast isolates from pigs and food.**

The Commission informed Member States about an ongoing investigation carried out by ECDC into an outbreak of *Salmonella* Goldcoast which has affected persons in six EU countries so far, with 150 potentially linked cases. The epidemiological and laboratory investigations suggest that persons are infected following the consumption of products containing pork, (such as salami and sausages), but no single contaminated vehicle has been identified. Furthermore, as cases have occurred over a very long period (most of 2009, with new cases being reported in 2010), it appears that the source of contamination is continuous, suggesting a problem in the pig population in some EU countries. The recent EFSA baseline survey on *Salmonella* in the EU has shown that at least 10 EU countries had pig holdings that were positive for *Salmonella* Goldcoast. In humans, this serovar is rare, making this specific outbreak noteworthy. Laboratory investigations are currently underway to deepen understanding of the microbiological profile of *Salmonella* isolates from human cases. This will shed further light on the extent to which cases in different EU countries are linked. It is now also necessary to compare these microbiological profiles from human isolates to those of food and feed (using a standardised protocol) to understand where contamination is occurring in the food chain and to recommend possible future control measures. This is the main reason why the ECDC asked the Commission to facilitate EU countries sharing the *Salmonella* Goldcoast isolates with a single laboratory in the EU to complete the analysis. It was important for laboratories conducting the analysis use the same protocols for testing. The Member States expressed their readiness to cooperate with ECDC and promised to make available all relevant information.

5. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a draft Commission Decision concerning a financial contribution from the Community towards a survey on the prevalence of *Listeria monocytogenes* in certain ready-to-eat foods to be carried out in the Member States (SANCO/5100/2009) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, legal basis Regulation, legal basis: Directive 2003/99/EC Art. 5 and Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 Art. 66)**

The Committee had been due to have an exchange of views on the Decision and possibly deliver an opinion on it. However, given that the CIS consultation was still in progress, the vote on this subject was postponed until the next SCFCAH meeting in April. The Commission introduced the draft proposal, highlighting the main amendments which had been made. Member States raised two questions. First, they wanted to know whether samples which had already been collected would be co-financed by the Commission, and second, they asked for clarification as to whether the samples could be used in the study.

The Commission answered that co-financing was unlikely because of the lack of a legal basis. However, the issue would be discussed further with DG BUDG and SANCO financial Units. As far as samples already collected were concerned, they could be used. It emerged from the discussion that only four Member States had not yet started collecting samples. Most of the Member States which had started the exercise said they would stop it until the adoption of the decision.

6. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards farmed game (SANCO/10308/2010) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, legal basis Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, Art. 10 (2))**

The members of the SCFCAH were provided with a new revision of the draft Regulation. The Commission explained the amendments introduced to the text in detail, stressing that they were intended to improve animal welfare when slaughtering. The first major modification is that slaughtering shall only be carried out by persons with the appropriate level of competence to do so without causing the animal any avoidable pain, distress or suffering. The second is that the presence of an official or approved veterinarian during slaughter and bleeding at the farm could be avoided if the food business operator receives appropriate training. The Member States showed general interest in the modifications but said it was necessary to discuss the issue further at the Working Group.

7. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annex II to Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards farmed game (SANCO/10309/2010) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, legal basis Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, Art. 17 (2))**

The proposal is very closely linked to the draft Regulation discussed under point 6. The Commission provided Member States with a newly-revised document as well as with an oral presentation on the changes made in the text since the last revision. The proposal aims to amend two sections of the Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, one concerning a special health mark, and the other concerning a new model of health certificate for animals slaughtered at holdings. Member States had no comments on the proposal. It will be discussed further at the Working Group and then presented for a vote.

8. **Exchange of views on a draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 1162/2009 as regard health import conditions on food containing both**

**products of plant origin and processed products of animal origin and establishing a model of certificate (SANCO/10492/2010) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, legal basis Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, Art. 9)**

Public health and animal health are becoming ever more closely intertwined, which is why the Commission is making this proposal. At present, the Commission is holding talks with Member States at working group level concerning composite products containing more than 50% of products of animal origin. It was stressed that the proposed draft Regulation was consistent with the legislation which is currently in force as regards animal health. This document will be discussed at the next working group on 19 April. The intention of the Commission is to finalise the draft Regulation as soon as possible to be able to present it for a vote before the summer break.

**9. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annex X to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the list of rapid tests (SANCO/10113/2010) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny, legal basis Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, Art. 23a)**

The issue was discussed at the previous Standing Committee meeting in February. Since then, the Commission provided the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) with the additional data required. Now EFSA will revise its opinion on the analytical sensitivity of approved TSE rapid tests, based on a study performed by the Community Reference Laboratory (CRL) for TSEs. The results are expected in April. The Commission asked EFSA for some indications of the potential outcome of assessment in order to be able to plan the date of the vote.

**Other business**

**• Information to the European Commission on Listeria cases in Austria**

The Austrian representative gave a detailed presentation on the steps the Austrian authorities had undertaken to cope with an outbreak of listeriosis due to the consumption of 'Quargel' cheese produced by an Austrian manufacturer. As of 10 March 2010, five out of 24 (21%) persons who had contracted the disease had died. The long-term average over recent years before the outbreak of this strain rated mortality from Listeriosis at 28.7%. Since the withdrawal from the market of the cheese concerned, two further cases of illness have been confirmed by the AGES reference centre for Listeriosis. Since February 2010, further investigations are being carried out by the criminal investigation department (CID), by order of the public prosecutor. As soon as the CID reports are available, Austria will send further reports.

**• Inquiry from Slovakia regarding trade in raw milk**

Slovakia asked the European Commission to state its position on the trade of raw milk from a production holding in one Member State to a processing establishment in another Member State. Slovakia asked for the position to be made available in writing so that food business operators and competent authorities could familiarise themselves with the exact requirements. The Commission agreed to send a letter explaining its position within a week.

**• Request from Belgium on the procedure to be granted Trichinella-free status in pig meat**

The Commission informed Belgium that the first step to initiate the procedure to obtain Trichinella-free status was to send a request by e-mail and by fax. The issue will be discussed at working group level on 19 April and finally at the Standing Committee level.

- **State of play on the amendment of Commission Decision 2007/643/EC on emergency measures applying to fishery products imported from Albania and intended for human consumption — point raised by Germany**

In response to the German inquiry, the Commission agreed to examine the issue closely and to send a reply in writing.

Eric Poudalet  
Director  
*(Signed)*