

Draft agenda of the Scientific Steering Committee Meeting of 18-19 October 2001

1. Welcome, apologies, introductory remarks, declaration of interest.
2. Approval of the agenda
3. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 6-7 September 2001
4. Procedural matters (if any)
5. Multidisciplinary matters:
  - a. Co-ordination: Reports of the Chairmen of the 8 Scientific Committees;
  - b. Harmonisation of risk assessment methods:
    - Progress report on Task Force activities;
    - Common format for opinions and Glossary of terms.
  - c. Emerging scientific issues (progress reports);
6. Multidisciplinary matters relating to TSE/BSE
  - 6.1. Report by the chairman of the TSE/BSE *ad-hoc* group meeting of 4 October 2001
  - 6.2. Reports on specific multidisciplinary matters relating to TSE/BSE:
    - a. The origin of BSE and routes of transmission
    - b. TSE infectivity distribution in ruminant tissues:
      - state of affairs
      - safety of ruminant heads
      - specified risk materials in small ruminants
    - c. TSEs in small ruminants. In view of the statement in August 2001 by the UK Food Standards Agency, in the event that new research confirms or cannot exclude that BSE was present in the UK sheep population in the early 1990's:
      - 1 What criteria can be used as a tool in the context of routine slaughter to ensure that meat is safe for the consumer in terms of:
        - source of the individual animal
        - age of animal, bearing in mind that it is difficult to determine the age of sheep less than one year old using physical characteristics;
        - Use of rapid testing;
        - Genotyping;
        - Removal of SRM;
 for (a) sheep and (b) goats?
      - 2 Is the consumption of milk and milk products derived from (a) sheep and (b) goats safe? What criteria if any can be used to ensure or maximise safety in terms of:
        - Age of animal;
        - Use of rapid testing;
        - Genotyping;
        - TSE free flocks;
 for (a) sheep and (b) goats?
      3. Is it possible to define a TSE-free sheep flock/goat herd? If so, what criteria can be used to establish such a group?
      4. What are the criteria which should be used in a widespread genotyping and breeding programme for resistance to TSEs in small ruminants?
      5. Is it possible to actualise the existing Geographical BSE Risk Analysis to small ruminants, by taking into account factors that may be unique to sheep.

- d. The six BARB cases in the UK (for opinion).
  - e. BSE eradication: update of the SSC opinion of September 2000 and equivalence of the UK and FRG culling approaches with EC Regulation N° 999/2001 (for opinion).
  - f. Safety of catgut (for opinion).
  - g. Geographical BSE Risk: progress report and possible opinions.
  - h. Preliminary opinion on The risk of dissemination of brain particles when applying certain stunning methods (account of comments received so far).
  - i. Progress report on pending questions:
    - BSE epidemiology (survey methods);
    - The safety of human blood and human-derived products: progress report and update of the mandate;
  - j. upcoming issues and new questions:
    - Pending reports on ways of disposals.
7. Info on the follow-up given to the opinions adopted at the previous SSC meetings.
  8. Information by the Commission services on other matters related to consumer health.
  9. Any other business.