SUMMARY REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 13 MAY 2014
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)

Chairman: Mr Koen Van Dyck

27 Member States were present. Malta was absent and not represented.

A.01 Update by the Commission and Member States on an ongoing multinational foodborne outbreak of Hepatitis A.

EFSA provided by videolink an update of the current outbreak of Hepatitis A in certain Member States (MS) and presented a preliminary report on the tracing activities to identify the source of the outbreak.

A.02 Update by the Commission and Member States on a multinational foodborne outbreak of S. Stanley

The Commission announced the publication of an updated ECDC/EFSA joint outbreak assessment on Salmonella Stanley in certain EU Member States. Austria made an update of the current investigations pointing at a common source in the turkey meat production chain.

A.03 Presentation by EFSA and discussion on the scientific opinion on Salmonella and Norovirus in leafy greens eaten raw as salads

This is the first opinion of a series of five opinions linked to the safety of fruits and vegetables. EFSA presented the opinion linked to Salmonella and Norovirus in leafy greens eaten raw as salads.

A.04 Presentation by EFSA and discussion on Scientific Opinion on the public health risks related to the maintenance of the cold chain during storage and transport of meat of domestic ungulates

EFSA concludes that based on an assessment of the growth of key pathogens linked to the surface temperature of carcasses, process criteria (transport time/temperature
combinations) and/or performance criteria (pathogen growth) could be developed replacing the current rules linked to the core temperature of the meat before transport. Different Member States expressed their support for this new approach.

A.05 Exchange of views of the Committee on irradiation of colouring agent brown Iron Oxide in food supplements.

Iron oxide used mainly as coloring agent is not authorised for irradiation but BE found it on the market used as colorant in food supplement. The Commission will ask EFSA to evaluate the robustness of existing assessments and assess the risk linked to the irradiated iron oxide.

B.01 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annex III of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the handling of certain offal from animals intended for human consumption (See point c.01 of the SCFCAH of 10/4/2014)

This vote will help to maintain the possibility to import stomachs for the production of rennet, solving the concerns expressed by certain Member States and third countries.

Vote taken: Favourable opinion.

C.01 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards model documents for food chain information and lists of approved food establishments. (See point c.02 of the SCFCAH of 10/4/2014)

Comments from Member States on the use of TRACES and simplification of the FCI model. Contact data of the private veterinarian and the approval number of the slaughterhouse should be added to the model.

C.02 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision as regards a Union financial contribution towards the discriminatory testing of historical BSE cases

LU and DK will be excluded due to the very small amount that would be reimbursed. In cases where the samples are sent to the EURL or to another MS, cost of sending the samples will not be reimbursed. Member States raised concern about the complexity of the documents requesting financial support from the Commission.

M.01 Re-inforced checks linked to STEC

The Commission is currently discussing guidelines linked to STEC in food. Based on these ongoing discussion and the risk mitigating measures presented, the proposed measures of re-enforced checks were discussed mainly in the absence of harmonised
criteria on STEC in the EU. Some Member States will inform the Commission in writing of their opinion.

M.02 Chlorate in food and vegetables.

National rules apply where no EU rules are in force (only for food of animal origin). Chlorate is not authorised today as a pesticide and a default approved today set the MRL at 0.01 mg/kg. But some Member States have found higher levels of chlorate in vegetables.

The use of chlorate is authorised below the limit of 0.01 mg/kg. The levels used in vegetables up to 0.01 mg/kg is posing a problem. Indeed some Member States are recalling all frozen vegetables exceeding the level of 0.01 mg/kg. The treatment should be considered as a processing aid. Processing aids are approved under the responsibility of Member States. Some Member States are applying higher levels in comparison with the default value of 0.01 mg/kg.