SUMMARY REPORT OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2013
(Section Biological Safety of the Food chain)

Chair: K. Van Dyck

26 Member States were present. Bulgaria was absent and represented by Belgium. Cyprus was absent and not represented.

A.1 Presentation of the draft annual report on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSE) monitoring in Member States in 2012

A PowerPoint Presentation summarized the draft report on TSE monitoring in Member States in 2012.

Regarding BSE in cattle, the number of animals tested in 2012 decreased by 25% compared to 2011, as a consequence of the revision of the testing age limit which became applicable as of 1 July 2011 in 25 Member States (72 months in healthy slaughtered cattle and 48 months in risk animals). 18 cases were detected in 2012, down from 28 in 2011. The information available in the Member States on atypical BSE was completed and shows a very stable “background noise” of 7 to 8 cases of atypical BSE per year for the last 3 years.

Regarding TSE in small ruminants, the level of testing slightly decreased in 2012 compared to 2011. As in previous years, no BSE-like case was detected in 2012. 936 cases of classical scrapie and 165 cases of atypical scrapie were detected in sheep in 2012, and respectively 1208 and 11 in goats. Only a few Member States have experienced a real problem with classical scrapie in 2012: Greece, Italy and Romania in sheep; Cyprus mainly, and to a much lesser extend Greece and United Kingdom in goats. When these Member States are excluded from the calculation, a decreasing trend of the prevalence rate of classical scrapie can be identified in sheep mainly but also to some extend in goats, in the rest of the EU.

A.2 Information on the public health requirements (hygiene Regulations) on imports of food of animal origin into the European Union (see point A4 of the SCFCAH of 10 July 2013)

Information on EU rules for import of food of animal origin for which no full harmonisation applies (listing of country, listing of establishment, certificate) was presented. The draft will also be presented in Working Group import controls on 16 October 2013.
A.3 **Import of sprouts and seeds for sprouting - state of play**

United Kingdom and Netherlands provided an update on the situation regarding certification of imported seeds for sprouting.

A.4 **Update by the Commission and Member States on multinational foodborne outbreaks of Hepatitis A in 2013 (see item A3 of the SCFCAH of 10 July 2013)**

Two major outbreaks of foodborne Hepatitis A occurred in the EU in 2013. An update on the efforts made during the summer had been presented to the Committee by Italy and Ireland showing the good collaboration between authorities to trace the source of the infection.

A.5 **Presentation by the Netherlands of the final report of the pilot project in poultry meat inspection in the Netherlands**

In the context of Article 17 of Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 Netherlands implemented a pilot project, from April 2011 to June 2012 to try new approaches in meat inspection in the poultry sector. Netherlands presented the results of such pilot project.

A.6 **Request of Denmark on special guarantees for Salmonella in chicken meat (see item A1 of the SCFCAH of 10 July 2013)**

Denmark provided clarification on some questions raised. A tour de table indicated that there is no qualified majority to support the request.

A.7 **Request from Italy regarding mechanically separated meat (fax dated 23.08.2013 addressed to Chief Veterinary Officers of all Member States – ARES 2924577)**

Member States which took the floor reacted and raised concerns about the intercommunity trade of the products containing mechanically separated food without labelling it.

A.8 **Information from the Commission on the adoption procedure (PRAC) related to item B.2 of the agenda of the SCFCAH meeting of 22 May 2013**

Commission informed Member States about the on-going procedure where the ENVI Committee of the European Parliament is preparing a resolution opposing the revision of pig meat inspection which got a favourable opinion in the SCFCAH meeting of May 2013. The Commission invited Member States to provide background information on the proposed rules when in contact with the European Parliament (EFSA advice, focus on current risks, avoid cross-contamination due to handing of carcasses during post-mortem inspection).

A.9 **Information from the Commission on the specified risk material (SRM) policy linked to the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) status of the country: discussion and exchange of views**

Considering that an increasing number of Member States are being granted the status of country with a negligible risk of BSE, the Commission asked the
Member States representatives to express their views on a possible review of the rules regarding the prohibition of SRM in the countries with a negligible risk of BSE.
The comments received from the Member States will feed the on-going reflection on this issue.

**B.1 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision on harmonised monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and commensal bacteria (see item B.3 of the SCFCAH of 10 July 2013)**

The Commission presented a Decision on minimum requirements for a harmonised monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in pathogens and commensals detected in food and animals. Some clarifications were requested. Harmonised surveillance is one of the key actions of the Commission action plan against antimicrobial resistance.

**Vote taken:** qualified majority (348 votes in favour, 4 votes absent).

**B.2 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision as regards a Union financial aid towards a coordinated control plan for antimicrobial resistance monitoring in zoonotic agents in 2014 (see item C.1 of the SCFCAH of 10 July 2013)**

COM presented a Decision granting financial support to the Member States for carrying out in 2014 the monitoring of antimicrobial resistance in accordance with the Decision presented under item B1. Some clarifications were provided.

**Vote taken:** qualified majority (348 votes in favour, 4 votes absent).

**M.1** Commission informed Member States of a new Better Training for Safer Food training course related to enforcement of EU law ("organisation and implementation of training activities to strengthen EU law enforcement in sanitary and phytosanitary fields in EU Member States").

**M.2** Commission informed Member States on the possibility to have a baseline survey regarding the contamination of oysters with Norovirus.

**M.3** Member States were informed of a planned FVO audits covering border controls against African Swine Fever (ASF) not included in the 2013 Audit Programme. The audit will concern four Member States (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) from the 14 to 25 October 2013.