SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2009 IN BRUSSELS
(Section: Biological Safety of the Food Chain)

Chairman: K. Van Dyck

All the Member States were represented.

1. State of play of the approval of the 2009 National Residue Control Plans (E5) and presentation of the Summary report of the results 2008 (EFSA) (Directive 96/23)

To protect public health, the Member States of the European Union are constantly striving to reduce the presence of undesirable residues of pharmacologically active substances in food of animal origin. Council Regulation (EEC) No 2377/904 establishes maximum limits for residues of veterinary medicinal products in food-producing animals and animal products. Council Directive 96/23/EC lays down measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof, mainly veterinary medicinal products, in animals and animal products. Additionally, Commission Decision 97/747/EC lays down levels and frequencies of sampling for certain animal products. In the framework of Article 31 of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002, the Commission asked EFSA for assistance in preparing an annual technical report on residue monitoring in food of animal origin in the Member States. The aim of this report is to summarise the results of the national residue monitoring plans carried out in the Member States during 2008.

2. Information to the Member States on proposed reimbursements to be made in the framework of the 2008 eradication and monitoring programmes

The Commission intends to pay for various programmes, namely Avian Influenza, Salmonella breeders and Salmonella layers. During the meeting a flowchart showing the proposed payments towards the 2008 Eradication programmes was distributed. The Commission official pointed out that some of the amounts mentioned in the table were still not determined. In order to complete the table the Commission needed the Member States to provide it with additional, technical information and examinations. It was clearly stated that the Commission intended to pay all the Member States before the end of 2009.

EFSA requests for information and possible endorsement:

3. Draft report on using food-borne outbreak data for source attribution of human salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis cases in the EU

In order to identify and prioritise food safety interventions, it is important to quantify the burden of human food-borne illnesses attributable to specific food sources. A variety of methods for human illness source attribution are available, including the use of food-borne
outbreak data. These data are in fact a proven means of determining the most important food vehicles for different food-borne pathogens.

The Commission representative distributed a draft scientific article on using outbreak data analysis for source attribution of human salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis in Europe and sought permission to use in the article the data on food-borne outbreaks reported by Member States (plus Norway and Switzerland). The main objectives of the article are to analyse at European level the most important food source categories for human Salmonella and Campylobacter infections, and to test the usefulness of the method for source attribution purposes as well as to compare the results with other methods. WHO is currently aiming to estimate the global burden of food-borne diseases combined with source attribution analyses. The use of food-borne outbreak data is considered the only means for source attribution in the vast majority of countries as this is the only type of data that many countries in the developing world have available. In this context it would be useful to have the data from the European Union analysed and published in a similar way. If an agreement is reached, the article will be submitted for publication in a peer reviewed scientific journal as part of an ongoing EFSA project on Salmonella source attribution, which will be completed by end 2009. EFSA’s Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection (a network of Member States’ representatives) has already been consulted (in June 2009) about the use of food-borne outbreak data. All the Task Force members were in favour of using the data.

4. Communication on the report of the MRSA baseline survey

The EFSA representative presented the report on the MRSA baseline survey in breeding pigs. Twenty four Member States, Norway and Switzerland participated in the MRSA survey, which took place in 2008. The major finding of this review was that MRSA had been commonly found in breeding pig holdings in 17 Member States. The report was to be published on 19 November. EFSA intended to draft a short press release which would be sent to Member States for comments before publication.

4A. Discussion and possible consensus on a draft Community Guide to Good Hygiene Practices for Wholesale Market Management in the European Union developed by World Union for Wholesale Markets

Article 9 of Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs provides for the development, assessment, dissemination and periodical review of Community guides to good practice for hygiene or for the application of the HACCP principles. Such guides may be of great value in supporting effective application of the Hygiene Regulations and the Commission encourages the EU food business sector to take the initiative in developing them.

The draft Community Guide to Good Hygiene Practices for Wholesale Market Management in the European Union was developed by World Union for Wholesale Markets. It had been assessed by national working groups and amended in accordance with their recommendations. The Standing Committee achieved consensus on the proposed guide. This is the first Community guide to good practice in the food hygiene sector.

4B. Information from Bulgaria on an additional request for a derogation for certain milk establishments

In September the Committee voted on a draft Commission Decision on transitional measures under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the processing of non-compliant raw milk in certain milk processing establishments in Bulgaria (SANCO/6272/2009). The Annexes of this decision listed about 55
establishments covered by the derogations. However, in the meantime, Bulgaria had sent an additional list of establishments requesting modification of the Annexes. Further to this request the Commission intended to present in December a proposal amending Annex I and Annex II to the Commission Decision (SANCO/6272/2009).


The purpose of the current draft Regulation is to amend Regulation (EC) No 798/2008 taking into account the requirements in Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 as regards equivalent guarantees for *Salmonella*. In particular, the import of live turkeys and hatching eggs should be prohibited unless an equivalent control programme has been submitted by the third country and approved by the Commission. Such approval is proposed for day-old chicks and hatching eggs from Canada, Israel and the United States. Additionally, based on information provided, import is reauthorised of live laying hens and broilers as day-old chicks from Israel as well as of hatching eggs and day-old chicks from Brazil.

The slightly amended draft proposal was presented for the opinion of the Committee.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.


The proposed measures aim to modify Chapter III of Annex III to Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 of 5 December 2005 permitting the use of a technique such as liquid chromatography (LC) mass spectrometry (MS) as the reference method for detecting lipophilic toxins.

The majority of the Member States expressed their strong support for the proposal. However, two problems were pointed out. First of all, opinions differed regarding the transitional period indicated in the Annex to the proposal. Ireland and Sweden would like to see this period reduced to two years. Greece, however, suggested extending it to three years following validation of the method by the Community Reference Laboratory. Another issue broadly discussed was raised by Spain, namely that it would be more appropriate to wait until the end of the validation procedure before starting to change the legislation.

In order to address the main concerns raised by the Member States, the Commission redrafted the proposal and made the following declaration:

- **Statement made by the Commission, done at SCFCAH 17 November 2009**
  The draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards recognised testing methods for detecting marine biotoxins in live bivalve molluscs (SANCO/6831/2009) will only be adopted when the liquid chromatography (LC) mass spectrometry (MS) procedure used as detection method has been validated by the Community Reference Laboratory.
Technical vote: Favourable opinion by qualified majority (in favour: 311 votes, abstention: 7 votes, against: 27 votes)

The proposal will be sent for SPS consultation and re-presented for a final vote in 2010.


Romania has been granted a transitional period, expiring on 31 December 2009, for compliance by certain meat establishments, fishery products establishments, eggs establishments and cold stores with the structural requirements of Regulations (EC) Nos 852/2004 and 853/2004 (Commission Decision 2007/710/EC as amended).

Since the accession of Romania, the number of establishments conforming to those structural requirements has increased by 80%. However, certain meat establishments, fishery products establishments, eggs establishments and cold stores are still undergoing the structural improvements necessary to comply with those requirements. These establishments are spread over the whole territory of Romania.

In light of the ongoing structural improvements it is necessary to provide for a time-limited derogation from the requirements laid down in Regulations (EC) Nos 852/2004 and 853/2004. The proposed measures aim to adopt a specific transitional arrangement (one year) on the basis of Article 9 of Regulation 853/2004 (Comitology procedures) allowing Romania to continue, after 31.12.2009 and until 31.12.2010, to apply the options provided for in Decision 2007/710/EC.

The marketing of products derived from non-compliant establishments or stored in non-compliant cold stores should be restricted to Romania or further processing should be carried out in establishments covered by the derogations provided for in this Decision.

The situation in the meat, eggs and fishery products sectors and cold stores in Romania should be reviewed before the end of that period. Therefore, Romania should submit a report to the Commission regarding progress in the upgrading of those establishments covered by this Decision.

The Member States welcomed the proposal, underlining the fact that the text was clear and well structured. A slightly amended draft proposal was presented for the opinion of the Committee.

Vote: Unanimously in favour.


This document has already been discussed several times at the working group meetings on implementation of hygiene regulations. The main purpose of this proposal is to amend Annex III to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin. The Commission official briefly explained the modifications made to the document. In the light of the working group’s discussions, the Commission added to
Section II, Chapter V of the Regulation two paragraphs regarding temperature conditions during transport of meat.
The Member States expressed their general support for the proposal.
The Regulation is due to be put to a vote at the next meeting of the Standing Committee in December.


Given that the CIS consultation was still in progress, the vote on this subject was postponed.
This proposal aims at amending Annexes I and II to Regulation (EC) No 854/2004. The proposed modifications have already been discussed several times at working group meetings.
It is intended to present the proposal for a vote at the Standing Committee meeting of 16 December 2009.


The purpose of this proposal is to amend Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria relating to Enterobacteriaceae in pasteurised milk and other pasteurised liquid dairy products and Listeria monocytogenes in food grade salt. The Commission representative presented the draft proposal highlighting two main amendments. The first one concerned the addition of food grade salt to the list of ready to eat food in respect of which regular testing for Listeria monocytogenes is not required. The reason for this modification is that according to scientific evidence, the presence and survival of L. monocytogenes in salt is unlikely in normal circumstances. The second amendment concerned the analytical reference methods set for Enterobacteriaceae in pasteurised milk and other pasteurised liquid dairy products. Given that the current method had been shown to be difficult to use for routine analyses, the Community Reference Laboratory for milk and milk products was proposing to change this method to ISO 21528-2, which is quicker and easier to perform.

The draft Regulation is due to be put to a vote at the next meeting of the Standing Committee in December.


This proposal aims to authorise Cyprus to revise its annual monitoring programme and to lay down 48 months as the new age limit for BSE testing in that Member State.
This decision is based on the fact that Cyprus in 2008 submitted an application to revise its annual BSE monitoring programme. In 2009 the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) carried out an inspection in Cyprus in order to verify compliance with the epidemiological criteria. The results of that inspection acknowledged the proper implementation in Cyprus of the rules on protective measures regarding BSE laid down in Regulation (EC) No
999/2001. In the light of all available information, the Commission favourably evaluated the application submitted by Cyprus. The document, which was discussed during the last working group meeting, in itself does not present any technical problem. However, the Legal Service pointed out that as regards legal bases for this document there may be some problems. According to them, in the first place the procedures for examining programmes should be adopted. It was intended to present the proposal for a vote at the Standing Committee meeting in December but the vote would probably be postponed. The Commission promised to keep the Member States up to date.

**Miscellaneous**

- The Luxembourg representative asked the Commission about the impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the Comitology Procedure. The Commission explained that there were ongoing consultations with the Legal Service and with the Secretariat General and that the feedback would be communicated to Member States as soon as these consultations were finished.

Eric Poudelet
Director
*(Signed)*