President: Eric Poudelet

All the Member States were present.

The Chairman welcomed the Swiss delegation, which will be invited as of 1 July 2007 as an observer to the Standing Committee on the Food Chain and Animal Health. The sections concerned are Animal health and welfare, Biological safety of the food chain and Controls and import conditions. This participation will allow Switzerland to maintain the equivalence status already attained with EU legislation in the animal health and veterinary public health fields and to come closer to EU legislation in other domains such as import controls and import conditions.

1. Discussion to collect a consensus on the proposal from Denmark to be recognised as a region where the risk of Trichinella in domestic swine is officially recognised as negligible as laid down in Article 3 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 (See point 2 of 19 June 2007 SCFCAH) (RD)

In the framework of the Danish application to be recognised as a region where the risk of Trichinella in domestic swine is considered negligible, the Danish delegation outlined the latest amendments made to the contingency plan for the detection of Trichinella in Denmark and to the monitoring programme of wildlife to addressing the concerns raised by Finland. The following points have been added:

- Testing of all cats and rats in swine herds that are under suspicion of trichinellosis or have a confirmed diagnosis of trichinellosis.
- Monitoring of more wildlife species (50 more animals – including rats – in addition to the 300 foxes).
- Submission to a freezing treatment of all carcasses associated with Trichinella suspicion, as a clarification.
- Testing of all pigs from an infected herd for a minimum of 1 year.

The Finnish delegation distributed its letter to the Commission dated 17.7.2007 containing further comments to the Danish amendments. Finland maintains that rats are useful as indicator animals and should be included to the Trichinella monitoring programme even if the prevalence in pigs is negligible.

EFSA has launched a call for tender for a harmonised monitoring programme. Denmark has committed itself to align to the guidelines once it is released. In response to a comment made by the Dutch delegation, the Commission indicated that it did not intend to consult EFSA for evaluation of such monitoring programmes. Finland can approve the Danish application if the amendments announced are stated in the minutes.
The Danish application for Recognition as a region where the risk of Trichinella in domestic swine is officially recognised as negligible was submitted to the committee for a general consensus. As the Commission and the Member States raised no objection, Denmark was recognised as a Trichinella negligible region. An official letter will be sent to the Danish authorities and the official status will be posted on DG SANCO website.

2. **Better Training for Safer Food: state of play of the works and presentation of a DVD on the activity (SM)**

The Commission distributed the Better Training for Safer Food Annual Report 2006 and presented a DVD film on this new and ambitious initiative run by the DG Health and Consumer Protection. It aims at providing a Community training strategy for official Member States safety controls staff, and for third country participants on compliance with EU standards in the areas of food law, feed law, animal health rules, animal welfare rules, plant health rules.

3. **Presentation of the Commission's Annual Report on the monitoring and testing of ruminants for the presence of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) in the EU in 2006 (JOV)**

The Commission presented the main results of the draft Annual Report on the monitoring and testing of ruminants for the presence of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) in the EU in 2006, which is a requirement set out by Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 as amended by Regulation (EC) No 1041/2006. It compiles all individual reports delivered by the Member States (MS). All MS submitted information on the TSE testing of bovine, ovine and caprine animals. In addition Romania, Bulgaria and Norway also submitted information on their TSE testing programme. 2006 was the first time monthly information could be sent in electronic format and compiled in a specific database. MS were requested to send in their comments on the report by 30 July 2007. The final report will then be published on DG SANCO Food and Feed Safety website.

Denmark stressed the importance of also making public statistics for countries where no cases of TSE can be observed anymore.

4. **Consultation of the SCFCAH meeting on the case for a Community guide to good practice for hygiene in flocks of broilers, its scope and subject matter (KDS) (See point 2 of 24 May 2007 SCFCAH)**

Community guides are voluntarily and written by stakeholders. The committee's role is to assess the need for such guides, the purpose and the content. The purpose of the present proposed guide is to assist the whole chain of chicken meat production, from the farm to the processor plant, to better understand Community hygiene requirements, in particular to enable them to ensure risks of *Salmonella* infection are minimised.

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1 [http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygieneclegation/trichinella_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygieneclegation/trichinella_en.htm)
The Italian delegate was of the opinion that the scope should not be extended to cover also animal health and transport.
For the French delegate the guide should not be too ambitious and focus on hygiene aspects.
The Commission will pass on comments to COPA-COGECA\(^3\) and AVEC\(^4\) for further development of the guide.
The UK delegate wished to have a debate on Community guides in general and on their legal validity. A cautious approach should be taken because of possible discrepancies between various guides. He proposed to set up a working group for a consistent approach. The Commission pointed out that guidelines are not secondary legislation but explain the existing Community legislation.


The next three proposals were discussed at the working group meetings of 4 June and 2 July 2007.

The Commission outlined the latest amendments made to this proposal, which aims at:
- introducing alternative screening methods for the detection of amnesic shellfish poison (a type of marine biotoxins) in edible parts of molluscs;
- providing flexibility for the post-mortem inspection of carcases in small and medium establishments. An official auxiliary may perform the post-mortem inspection in small and medium slaughterhouses provided the official veterinarian visits the establishment at least once during the slaughtering process and the competent authority identifies the establishments following a risk analysis;
- laying down detailed requirements under which the post-mortem inspection procedure of fattening pigs and young ruminants may be limited to visual inspection;

Some delegations indicated that they would vote against the proposal as they considered it to be too flexible or too restrictive.
The Commission provided further clarifications. It agreed to state in the minutes:
- at the request of Finland, that Regulation 854/2007 gives the possibility to the Member States to adopt national measures aiming at adjusting inspection procedures;
- at the request of Belgium and Luxemburg in the absence of auxiliaries the ante- and post-mortem inspection is to be carried out by official veterinarians.

Vote: in favour at the qualified majority (263 votes), 51 votes against, 31 votes abstaining

\(^3\) Comité des Organisations Professionnelles Agricoles de L'Union Européenne - Confédération Générale des Coopératives Agricoles de l'Union Européenne (http://www.copa-cogeca.be/en/)

\(^4\) Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade in the EU countries (http://www.avec-poultry.eu/sw153.asp)

The Commission outlined minor changes to the draft that aims at allowing the use of liquid pepsin as an alternative to pepsin powder for the detection of Trichinella.

Vote: in favour at unanimity


This proposal aims at amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 by providing a decrease in the administrative burden for small fishing vessels, in particular with regard to documentation requirements, as well as by taking into account of the latest scientific developments with regard to gelatine and collagen production.

Vote: in favour at unanimity


Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 sets out the requirements governing the production and placing on the market of fishery products intended for human consumption and provides for specific requirements for production and placing on the market of fish oil for human consumption. A transitional period ending on 31 October 2007 was granted to allow establishments in third countries to adapt to the new situation. However, it appears from recent contacts that third countries will not be able to fulfill the new import conditions by that date. In particular they are experiencing practical difficulties in adjusting the processing conditions in fish oil producing establishments.

In order to avoid any disruption in trade, it is proposed to extend the date until which the derogation was granted to 31 October 2008. An extension to 31 December 2008 is also provided for fish oil imported into the Community and accompanied by certificates issued under the certification regime applicable before 31 October 2008.

Vote: in favour at unanimity
9. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision concerning a financial contribution from the Community towards a baseline survey on the prevalence of Salmonella in breeding pigs to be carried out in the Member States (Legal basis: Decision 90/424/EEC) (SANCO/1077/2007 Rev. 9) (KDS/SI) (See point 4 of the agenda of 19 June SCFCAH)

Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 on the control of Salmonella and other specified foodborne zoonotic agents provides for the definition of a Community target for reducing the prevalence of Salmonella in populations of herds of breeding pigs by the end of 2008.

In order to set the Community target, comparable data on the percentage of Salmonella infected holdings of breeding pigs in the Member States needs to be available. A special survey should therefore be carried out to monitor the prevalence of Salmonella in breeding pigs over a suitable period in order to take account of possible seasonal variations.

The Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) adopted on 30 April 2007 a Report on a proposal for technical specifications for a baseline study on the prevalence of Salmonella in breeding pigs.

The EFSA report recommends additional sampling for the estimation of within-holding prevalence. Such sampling should be carried out by a number of Member States geographically representing the different situations in the Community.

The survey is to provide technical information necessary for the development of Community veterinary legislation. Given the importance of collecting comparable data on the prevalence of Salmonella in slaughter pigs in the Member States, they should be granted a Community financial contribution. It is appropriate to reimburse 100% of the costs incurred on the laboratory testing, subject to a ceiling. All other costs such as sampling, travel, administration, etc should not be eligible for any Community financial contribution.

Pursuant to Decision 90/424/EEC the Community is to undertake or assist the Member States in undertaking the technical and scientific measures necessary for the development of veterinary legislation and for the development of veterinary education or training.

A financial contribution from the Community should be granted provided that the survey is carried out in accordance with the relevant provisions of Community law and subject to compliance with certain other condition, in so far as the actions provided for are effectively carried out and provided that the authorities furnish all the necessary information within the time limits provided for in this Decision.

Vote: in favour at unanimity, Lithuania represented by Luxemburg


Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs lays down microbiological criteria for certain micro-organisms and the implementing rules to be
complied with by the food business operators when implementing the general and specific hygiene measures referred to in Regulation (EC) No 852/2004 on the hygiene of foodstuffs.

This proposal amending Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 aims at:
- updating the food safety criteria for *Salmonella* and *Enterobacter sakazakii* in dried infant formulae and certain dried dietary foods for infants in line with a reviewed opinion of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on this issue;
- introducing a new process hygiene criterion for *Bacillus cereus* in dried infant formulae and dried dietary foods for special medical purposes intended for infants below 6 months of age, in line with an EFSA opinion on this issue;
- revising the analytical reference method for staphylococcal enterotoxins;
- further specifying the sampling rules for Salmonella analysis on carcases of cattle, pig, sheep, goats and horses.

The Commission took note of further comments made by Belgium and France. It is intended to take the final vote on this draft Regulation in October 2007, after the 60 days SPS notification.

Technical vote: in favour at unanimity, Lithuania represented by Luxemburg

11. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the committee on a draft Commission Decision authorising the use of at risk bovine animals until the end of their productive lives in Germany following official confirmation of the presence of BSE (SANCO/1703/2007 Rev. 2) (Legal basis: Regulation (EC) 999/2001) (Right of scrutiny of the EP) (MP) (See point 7 of 19 June 2007 SCFAH)

Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 provides for the immediate killing and complete destruction of bovine animals epidemiologically linked to a BSE case, because those animals may have potentially consumed the same contaminated feed as the affected animal.
At the request of a Member State and based on a favourable risk assessment taking particular account of the control measures in that Member State, a decision may be taken to allow the use of at-risk bovine animals until the end of their productive lives, and therefore, by way of derogation from the general provisions, to defer their immediate killing and complete destruction.
Germany has submitted to the Commission a request for implementing the derogation provided for in Article 13(1) of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 as regards the use of at-risk bovine animals until the end of their productive lives. The official control measures presented by Germany provide for strict movement restrictions and traceability of animals in such a way that the current level of protection of humans and animals is not endangered. Germany should therefore be allowed to implement the derogation.
Spain and Slovakia asked whether a harmonised system will apply for all other Member States. The Commission assured that the same conditions will be used for any MS applying for the derogation.
Sweden could only support the proposal if it covered animals born after the feed ban in 2001, which is not the case.
The Commission gave further clarification to comments from MS.
Vote: in favour at the qualified majority, 10 votes against, Lithuania represented by Luxemburg


Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 sets out a list of rapid tests approved for the monitoring of TSEs in bovine, ovine and caprine animals. Changes to rapid tests and to test protocols may be made only with the approval of the Community Reference Laboratory (CRL) for TSEs and provided that the CRL finds that the changes do not alter the sensitivity, specificity or reliability of the tests. On 13 April 2007, the CRL approved changes made to the currently approved TSE rapid post-mortem test “Enfer TSE Kit version 2.0”, and therefore recommended that the amended version (“Enfer TSE version 3”) should also be listed in Regulation (EC) No 999/2001.

Vote: in favour at unanimity, Lithuania represented by Luxemburg

13. Miscellaneous / Divers

• Declaration of the European Commission:

Import of treated intestines

Annex IX to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 lays down the rules for the importation into the Community of live animals, embryos, ova and products of animal origin. Chapter C of Annex IX to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 lays down the TSE related import rules of products of animal origin from bovine, ovine and caprine animals. The reference to meat products in Section A of Chapter C refers to the definition as defined by Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and therefore excludes "treated intestines" from the scope of this Chapter. This exclusion is unintentional as treated intestines should have been included in line with the rules applicable before 1 July 2007.

Awaiting an amendment of Section A, Chapter C of Annex IX, the import conditions related to meat products should apply to the import of treated intestines from third countries.

The Commission will present a proposal for an opinion including treated intestines to the scope of Chapter C of Annex IX to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 in the SCFCAH meeting on 18-19 September 2007.
The Commission informed the committee of the publication of DG SANCO-DG JLS joint document “Green Paper on Bio-Preparedness”\(^7\). This Green Paper intends to stimulate a debate and launch a process of consultation of European citizens, stakeholders and Member States on how to reduce biological risks, and to enhance preparedness and response. Responses should be sent to the Commission by 1 October 2007.

The Italian delegate requested some information on the nuclear incident caused by the recent earthquake which occurred in Japan, as regards the possible risk for foodstuffs and the measures to be taken for food and feed which may be infected. The Commission (mostly DG ENTR, DG ENV & DG SANCO) is monitoring the issue as to the contamination risk and is keeping close contact with the Japanese authorities.

The Belgian delegate shortly gave information on the bluetongue case observed in sheep the day before. There will be a consultation with neighbouring countries on the measures to take. A detailed presentation will be made on 19 July at the meeting of the Animal health and welfare section of the SCFCAH.

Some concern has arisen in Belgium concerning the implementation of the food chain information system for pigs to enter into force on 1 January 2008. The Belgian delegate indicated that it will be difficult to meet that date and asked whether other Member States were encountering the same problem. In September the Commission will ask 6 to 8 Member States to volunteer to discuss the implementation of the food chain information for big ruminants. (RD)

Sweden raised a question on the import of Cray fish from Armenia and on the evaluation by the Commission of Armenian establishments. Armenia is on the fish list but with the restriction to Cray fish which have not been farmed. Further to the latest inspection by the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO), shortcomings were observed which need to be corrected. FVO colleagues are looking into the corrective actions taken. If these were satisfactory, the restriction could be lifted and the imports enlarged to other fishery products. (RM)

The Commission is changing the import certificates for live poultry, hatching eggs, poultry products, etc. to introduce new provisions with regard to avian influenza. (Draft Commission Decision laying down a list of third countries from which poultry, hatching eggs, day-old chicks, specified pathogen-free eggs, meat, minced meat and mechanically separated meat of poultry including ratites and wild game-birds, eggs and egg products may be imported into and transit through the Community and the applicable veterinary certification conditions, and repealing Decisions 93/342/EC, 94/438/EC and 2006/696/EC (doc. SANCO/10011/2007))

Draft Commission Decision concerning approval of Salmonella control programmes in breeding flocks of *Gallus gallus* in certain third countries in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 and amending Decision 2006/696/EC, as regards certain public health requirements at import of poultry and

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\(^6\) DG Health and Consumer Protection – DG Justice, Freedom and Security

hatching eggs (doc. SANCO/582/2006), has reached a technical agreement at the SCFCAH meeting of 24-25 April 2007.

The Commission informed the committee that its intention was to take a common vote on one single document integrating both animal health and public health requirements. (KDS)

- Draft Commission Decision amending Annex IV to Council Directive 90/539/EEC as regards model veterinary certificates for intra-Community trade in poultry and hatching eggs to take account of certain public health requirements (SANCO/443/2007), was voted on 24 May 2007 with an application date at 1 August 2007. At the request of the Commission, the committee agreed to postpone that application date to 1 September 2007, due translation delays. (KDS)

(signed)

Eric Poudelet
Acting for the Director