SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 19 JANUARY 2011

(Section: Biological Safety of the Food Chain)

Chairman: K. Van Dyck

All Member States were represented.

1. Information by Germany on the state of play concerning the recent case of dioxin contamination.

The German authorities provided an update on the dioxin contamination incident. Several delegations indicated to be satisfied with the information provided and the way the German authorities are managing the incident. The German delegation guaranteed that based on the currently available information that no contaminated food of animal origin has been traded to other Member States or exported to Third countries, with the exception of two batches of eggs traded to Netherlands of which one batch was after processing further traded to the United Kingdom and the export of potentially contaminated very limited quantities of pig meat to two other Member States. One of these Member States expressed its disappointment that they had to learn via the media of the trade of potentially contaminated pig meat from Germany to their countries before they were officially informed the day after via the RASFF. They also reported on the problems they are currently facing with their export to Turkey.

The Commission indicated to be satisfied with the management by the German authorities of the incident and that there are no grounds to impose restrictive measures on feed and food from Germany for safety reasons. Furthermore it was announced that the Commission is reflecting on additional measures to avoid the recurrence of such contamination incidents in the future such as separation/segregation of production streams of fats for industrial purposes from fats for feed and food and a reinforced dioxin monitoring in the feed chain.


The European Union Reference Laboratory (EU RL) for Parasites presented the Report on the Validation of the Trichin-L Antigen Test Kit of the Bio-Rad Company. The overall conclusion of the Report is that Trichin-L antigen Test Kit meets requirements for the accurate detection of Trichinella larvae in pork samples.

Additional questions were raised by several Member States to provide clarifications on costs, use of detergents, Trichinella species detected, stages detected, sensitivity
of different Trichinella species. The EU RL replied. Further comments/questions are to be forwarded to the Commission by the end of January 2011.

2A. Presentation of the new Comitology procedures under the Lisbon Treaty.

A Commission representative provided a presentation of the new comitology procedures, following the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon on 1 December 2009.

The Treaty of Lisbon substantially modifies the framework of powers conferred upon the Commission by the legislator. The new Treaty makes a clear distinction between the powers delegated to the Commission to adopt non-legislative acts of general application to supplement or amend certain non-essential elements of a legislative act (delegated acts) on the one hand and the powers conferred on the Commission to adopt implementing acts on the other hand. The main aspects of the procedures that will apply to these two types of acts have been outlined.

Particular emphasis has been given to the impeding adoption and entry into force on 1st March 2011 of a Regulation laying down the rules and general principles concerning mechanisms for control by Member States of the Commission's exercise of implementing powers (Implementing Regulation). The Implementing Regulation will provide for an automatic (partial) alignment of existing procedures except for 'regulatory procedure with scrutiny' ('PRAC'). Accordingly, measures subject to existing management/regulatory procedures will become subject to the (new) examination procedure whereas the existing advisory procedure will be replaced by the (new) advisory procedure.


The Commission presented revision 2 of the document with several changes proposed mainly by the legal service. The draft aims at replacing OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) references in Regulation (EC) No 854/2004 by references to diseases covered by Union legislation without changing the content of the current provisions. It also aims at allowing the official veterinarian to impose further treatment of Salmonella contaminated meat when taking a decision concerning the meat in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 854/2004.

Seven Member States made comments and requested further clarifications. The Commission agreed to provide these clarifications during a working group meeting.

4. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2009/719/EC authorising certain Member States to revise their annual BSE monitoring programmes. (doc. SANCO/13346/2010) (subject to the regulatory procedure with scrutiny; legal basis: Art. 6(1b) of Regulation (EC) No 999/2001)

The Commission representative presented the draft text whose aim is to amend the list of Member States allowed to modify their BSE surveillance programmes and to modify the provisions of such programmes by raising the age limit for BSE testing at slaughterhouse level from 48 months to 72 months as from 1 July 2011,
and by testing only a sample size of bovines aged over 72 months after 1 January 2013. The conclusions of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) opinion on the subject were recalled. Three Member States expressed their concerns about the text and the conclusions of the EFSA opinion. They pointed out some factual errors about their epidemiological situation as described in the EFSA opinion and said that they will inform the Commission accordingly. This information will be forwarded to EFSA in order to see if there is an impact on the conclusions of the opinion. Some Member States stressed the importance to have a good communication towards third countries in order to avoid future trade problems. The importance to stay in compliance with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) rules was also highlighted.

The President of the Committee announced that the intention of the Commission was to present this text for a vote at the next meeting of the Committee.

Any other business:

The United Kingdom questioned the Commission about its intentions to ask EFSA for an updated opinion on the risk related to the age limit for the removal of the vertebral column of cattle as a specific risk material. The Commission replied that so far there was no intention to send a mandate to EFSA on this matter as there was no new scientific data and the EU rules are now aligned with the OIE rules.