Chair: B. Van Goethem.

All Member States were represented.

Croatia attended the meeting as an observer.

A.1 Presentation of findings from two fact finding missions on primary production-seeds in Italy and the Netherlands

The PowerPoint presentation given by a representative from the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) provided a summary of two fact-finding missions on primary production in 2012 in Italy and the Netherlands. The Member States made no comments.

A.2 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft modification of the Guidance document on the implementation of certain provisions of Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 on the hygiene of food of animal origin: Guidance on the term 'obviously contaminated' in relation to parasites in fishery products

Parasites are commonly found in fish. However, fish cannot be placed on the market if ‘obviously contaminated’ with parasites. Various interpretations of the term cause trade problems. The draft text provides guidance on certain issues related to the term. It received massive support with one exception. The draft document will be presented to the Committee again.

A.3 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft modification of the Guidance document on Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 concerning meat preparations and meat products

The draft addition to the guidance document to Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin received increasing support from the Member States, although some made a study reservation because they received the proposal the day before. Suggestions for further editorial improvement are welcome. The Commission announced its intention to present the proposal for endorsement at the next Standing Committee meeting on March 20.
A.4 Presentation of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) Scientific Opinion on the risk posed by pathogens in food of non-animal origin. Part 1 (outbreak data analysis and risk ranking of food/pathogen combinations)

A representative from the Biological Hazards Unit of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) gave a detailed presentation on its first scientific assessment in Europe of public health risks posed by pathogens that may contaminate food of non-animal origin (FoNAO). The presentation described the EFSA’s mandate in this regard, the main points of its scientific opinion and its main conclusions and recommendations published on 8 January 2013. The EFSA representative also outlined the next steps related to the second part of its mandate by describing the factors that contribute to the risks posed by the pathogen or food combinations identified in the scientific opinion. The Member States made no comments.

A.5 Presentation of EFSA's Scientific Opinion on Public health risks represented by certain composite products containing food of animal origin composite products

The EFSA presented the outcome of its scientific opinion on composite products, including the decision tree set out in the opinion to help competent authorities and risk managers identify the risk posed by certain composite products. The Member States made no comments.

A.6 Request of the German Robert Koch Institute on the use of data from verified outbreaks

The Robert Koch Institute in Germany presented a request to use outbreak data published by the EFSA in a thesis. It was concluded that there was no objection to using the data in the thesis. If a scientific article is also considered for publication, the Member States would like to see the draft. This can be done by providing it on a confidential basis or by giving a short presentation on the main data at a Standing Committee or working group meeting. Member States also insisted that possible uncertainties be clearly mentioned in such publications. One Member State expressed some reservations about results published per Member State. It suggested publishing them at regional level.

A.7 Information from the EU Reference Laboratory for animal proteins in feedingstuffs regarding the DNA test for the detection of horse meat in certain food

The acting Director of the European Union Reference Laboratory for animal proteins in feedingstuffs (EURL-AP), presented to the Member States the recommended method that should be used for detecting the presence of horse DNA in meat products ready to eat. He replied to several questions and indicated that details on the method could be found on the EURL’s website at the following link: http://eurl.craw.eu/en/164/legal-sources-and-sops.

B.1 Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Implementing Decision authorising the use of at risk bovine animals until the end of their productive lives in Spain following official confirmation of the presence of BSE (see item C.1 of the SCFCAH of 12 December 2012)
The Commission presented a draft Commission Implementing Decision to allow Spain to use bovine animals epidemiologically linked to a bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) case until the end of their productive lives, taking into consideration that the official control measures presented by Spain provide for strict movement restrictions and traceability of animals in such a way that the current level of protection of human and animal health is not endangered.

Vote taken: unanimous in favour


Bulgaria is authorised to use milk that does not comply with the EU rules on total plate count and somatic cells in certain establishments listed in a specific Decision. The products in question must be placed on the Bulgarian market. This Decision removes seven establishments from the list. These establishments will be authorised to place their products on the EU market.

Vote taken: unanimous in favour


With regard to the provision introducing Salmonella into pig-meat inspection, several Member States welcomed the compromise. At the request of Member States, the Commission clarified the number of samples, the legal basis for collecting data from food business operators and the possible choice between approaches. Amendments will be introduced if appropriate.

Many Member States supported the proposal. Some remarks were made on the assistance of the official auxiliary during ante-mortem inspection by the official veterinarian and on the involvement of the official veterinarian during the post-mortem inspection of animals with abnormalities. The Commission will put the proposal on the agenda of the working group’s March 12 meeting on implementing the hygiene package and present it for vote at the next Standing Committee meeting in March.

C.2 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria for foodstuffs as regards Salmonella in pig carcases (see item C.3 of the SCFCAH of 21 September 2012)
The purpose of the draft proposal is to reduce the tolerance of the presence of Salmonella on the carcasses of slaughtered pigs. It is based on the EFSA opinion on pig-meat inspections, setting Salmonella as a high priority. It must be considered together with the amendment proposed in Regulation (EC) No 854/2004, strengthening supervision by the competent authority.

No comments were made, except by five Member States who expressed their support.

C.3 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 laying down specific rules on official controls for Trichinella in meat (see item C.4 of the SCFCAH of 21 September 2012)

The Commission informed Member States on a draft proposal for the review of Trichinella controls. The proposal includes a risk-based approach based on the status of holdings (controlled housing conditions), gradually ending systematic testing for holdings with a lower risk, and simplifying procedures. Member States welcomed the proposal and many of them supported it.

C.4 Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2073/2005 on microbiological criteria as regards histamine in fishery products

The draft Commission Regulation aligns EU legislation on histamine in fish sauce with that of The Codex Alimentarius. It will also correct some ambiguities and errors in the current legislative text. The Committee approved the content of the document. The few comments it made were of an editorial nature.


The EFSA opinion on biotoxins in live bivalve molluscs considered the current EU limit for yessotoxins too low and proposed to increase it. This was confirmed during the last Codex meeting on fish and fishery products in October last year. The draft proposal increases the limit for these toxins from 1 mg/kg to 3.75 mg/kg, as suggested by the EFSA. Member States agreed on the draft proposal. It might be voted on at the next Standing Committee meeting in March.