SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD ON 20 MAY 2010 IN BRUSSELS

(Section: Biological Safety of the Food Chain)

Chairman: K. Van Dyck

Malta was absent and not represented. The Czech Republic was partly absent and not represented. All the other Member States were present.

1. State of play of the Community Reference Laboratory for the detection of animal proteins in feed (CRA-W), on detection methods

The specialists from the Community Reference Laboratory (CRL) gave a lecture on methods for the detection of animal proteins in feed. At the request of one of the SCFCAH participants all of the Member States were provided with the PowerPoint presentations on this topic.

2. Presentation of the revision of the joint AFC/BIOHAZ guidance document on the submission of data for the evaluation of the safety and efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin intended for human consumption

The Commission presented to the Member States the revised guidance document and explained its content. Under a ‘self task’ mandate, the BIOHAZ Panel recommended the revision of the joint AFC/BIOHAZ guidance on the submission of data for the evaluation of the efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin. This revision included examples of study designs at the laboratory and at the slaughterhouse in order to demonstrate the efficacy of the tested substance. As far as the environmental risk was concerned, the revision included guidance on the type of data and/or studies that a dossier/application should address in assessing the impact of the disposal of substances, with particular reference to the biological and chemical risk for the environment, residues or their byproducts in carcasses and the potential development and spread of resistant strains. In order to properly assess the environmental issues and the aspects related to the development of antimicrobial resistance, representatives of SCENIHR (Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks), SCHER (Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks), and the Community Reference Laboratory for Antimicrobial Resistance had been involved in the revision of the present guidance document. The document referred generically to all candidate substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of foods of animal origin intended for human consumption and therefore did not address each specific
situation in detail. It was up to the applicant to use the appropriate methodologies and design the studies to generate the data to fit the requirements described in the guidance.

3. Discussion and possible call for experts on a European Good Hygiene Practices Guide for the collection, storage, trading and transport of cereals, oilseeds and protein crops developed by COGECA and COCERAL

The Guide had two legal bases, namely Regulation No 852/2004 referring to food hygiene and Regulation No 183/2005 referring to feed hygiene. This was also the reason why the Guide had been submitted to the SCFCAH – Animal Nutrition section at the end of April. The first draft of this document had been presented at the Working Group dealing with feed hygiene and had been found unsatisfactory. Consequently, the Commission had sent it back to the stakeholders asking for amendments. The Guide had essentially been redrafted and the last version had been sent to Member States together with the Agenda of the present meeting. The Commission asked the members of the SCFCAH whether the Guide complied with their expectations. The Member States could send their comments until the end of May. The Commission undertook to organise a Working Group in the event of a large number of substantive comments.

4. Information on a draft EFSA project on in-depth analyses of data on microbiological contaminants in food from the years 2004-2009 (as reported under Directive 2003/99/EC)

EFSA is charged with coordinating the annual reporting of zoonoses, zoonotic agents, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks in the European Union under Directive 2003/99/EC as well as analysing and summarising the data collected.

Since 2005, EFSA has received from the Member States and other reporting countries a substantial amount of data on different microbiological contaminants in foodstuffs. In the Community Summary Reports for the years 2004-2008, the data received on foodstuffs were summarised and analysed descriptively, but due to the large quantity of the data, in-depth analyses of the data have not be carried out and some data have been left unanalysed. Starting from 2006, some Member States have also submitted data on certain non-zoonotic microbiological contaminants in food. These data have only been analysed for one year, and the data from 2007-2009 have not been analysed.

EFSA would now like to analyse the existing data from the years 2005-2009 on zoonotic agents and other microbiological contaminants in food in more depth, focusing on aspects not analysed earlier. As regards financing, the entire exercise would be covered by EFSA’s budget.

The Member States gave a green light to EFSA for using the data.

5. Import/export of bivalve molluscs, EU/US equivalence exercise: state of play

Annex 1 to the Decision 2006/766/EC establishes the list of third countries from which imports of live, frozen or processed bivalve molluscs, echinoderms, tunicates and marine gastropods for human consumption are permitted. These imports remains possible from the USA until the 1st July 2010 but would stop in the absence of completion of an on-going equivalence exercise by that date.
In case that imports from the USA would stop, imports of adductor muscles of pectinidae other than aquaculture animals, completely separated from the viscera and gonads (article 1.2 to Decision 2006/766/EC) will remain possible.

5A. Request from EFSA on the use of data under the mandate for estimation of the public health impact of setting new targets for the reduction of Salmonella in broilers

In October 2009, the EFSA representatives had attended an SCFCAH – Biological safety meeting, where they had requested access to data for several ongoing EFSA mandates. At that time, the requested access covered most of the data EFSA needed (e.g. access to CSR data and baseline surveys), but did not include the use of data from the baseline survey on *Salmonella* in turkey flocks. The intention was that raw data would be handled internally in EFSA in collaboration with the Zoonoses Unit. The final tables required for modelling would be made available to the contractor in the format required for the modelling work and, if not published before by EFSA, would be presented and published in an anonymised form. Thus, Member States would be tagged with identity codes to avoid disclosing any previously unpublished data.

The Commission asked the Member States whether they agreed to give EFSA access to the data. The Member States generally agreed but, at the same time, called for further consultation with EFSA. Consequently, EFSA representatives would be invited to the next Standing Committee meeting in June.

5B. Guidelines for the evaluation of the commercial serological tests to detect anti-Trichinella antibodies in pig sera

Invited by the Commission, the specialist from the European Union Reference Laboratory for Parasites gave a presentation on the Guidelines for the evaluation of the commercial serological tests to detect anti-Trichinella antibodies in pig sera. He explained that the aim of the guidelines was to establish the minimum requirements to be met by serological kits intended to detect anti-Trichinella IgG in pig sera in order for them to be used to monitor Trichinella infection in domestic pigs from controlled housing conditions. The Commission asked the members of the SCFCAH to reflect on the presented document and to send their comments by 15 June 2010.


The purpose of this draft was to modify the list of certain milk processing establishments listed in Annex II to Commission Decision 2009/861/EC which have been allowed, by way of derogation from Regulation (EC) No 853/2004, to continue to process, after 31 December 2009, compliant and non-compliant milk without separate production lines.

The Bulgarian Authorities had sent to the Commission a revised and updated list of those establishments in February 2010. Given that the transitional period specified in the Decision was to expire in 2011, the Member States accepted the Bulgarian request, voting in favour by a qualified majority.

The issue had been discussed at the previous Standing Committee meeting in March. The Commission had communicated to the Member States all of the modifications that had since been made to the text, in particular those related to the Lisbon Treaty. As the Member States had no questions regarding the draft Regulation, the slightly amended draft proposal was presented for the opinion of the Committee.

Vote: In favour by qualified majority


The Committee was due to have an exchange of views on the Decision and possibly deliver an opinion on it. However, given that the draft proposal needed further in-depth discussion, the vote was postponed.

The Commission official explained the changes made since the last Standing Committee meeting and shed some light on the consultations with the Commission’s financial services. The majority of the Member States appreciated the Commission’s efforts to have the costs refunded for the samples already taken.

It was intended to present the proposal for a vote at the SCFCAH meeting of June 2010.


The Commission representative recalled the genesis of the draft Regulation and pointed to the amendments made to the text since the last Standing Committee meeting. Paragraph 5 of section III of the Annex provided that, by way of derogation from the requirement for an attestation by the official or approved veterinarian as to correct slaughter and bleeding and the date and time of slaughter, the competent authority may authorise the inclusion of this information in the declaration signed by the food business operator if two conditions are met. The first condition is that the holding must be situated in a region not under health restrictions in accordance with European Union law or national legislation, and the second is that the business operator must demonstrate that the animals are killed under the supervision of an animal welfare officer and without causing the animals any avoidable pain, distress or suffering. The draft proposal was a compromise worked out with the units responsible for animal health and welfare.

The proposal was closely linked to the draft Regulation discussed under point 9. The Commission presented the amendments made to the new health certificate forming part of the Annex to the Regulation. The draft proposal would be further discussed at the next SCFCAH meeting in June.


The Commission official presented the state of play with this draft regulation. The next two steps would be to establish public health measures for those products currently covered by the animal health measures and to finalise the proposal before the end of 2013.

The document would be presented at the Working Group on 31 May 2010.


The proposed regulation was intended to implement Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 with the aim of ensuring that measures are taken to detect and control Salmonella and other zoonotic agents at all relevant stages of production, processing and distribution, particularly at the level of primary production, in order to reduce their prevalence and the risk they pose to public health.

The Commission asked the SCFCAH representatives to send their comments on the draft before 25 June 2010.

13. Exchange of views on a Commission Regulation on Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) implementing measures

The purpose of this proposal was to establish implementing measures for the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed. This draft had been stuck in the pipeline for the past three years due to the ongoing case in the European Court of Justice. The Commission highlighted that the original draft was much more ambitious than the document attached to the agenda of the meeting. Moreover, an intra-SANCO consultation would be launched in the next few days. The Commission also stated that the draft Regulation would be discussed with the various stakeholders, consumers and industries at the meeting planned for 28 June 2010. It was intended to present the proposal for a vote at the SCFCAH meeting in July.
Other business

• Question from Ireland regarding the status of the interpretative document on the strategies to control antibiotic residues in boiled milk.

At the request of Ireland the Commission provided the Member States with up-to-date information regarding the interpretative document on the strategies to control antibiotic residues in boiled milk. The document had been presented by the Commission on 18 September 2006. In 2007 there had been a lot of discussions with the dairy industry and also some meetings with National Reference Laboratories and with the Community Level Laboratory in order to decide how to proceed with this document. The work had then stopped and no formal decision had since been taken on this subject.

• Salmonella criteria for fresh poultry meat — point raised by Germany.

At the request of Germany the Commission presented the state of play regarding the Salmonella criteria for fresh poultry meat. When the comparison of different options would be completed they would be presented at the next Council–CVO Meeting in June.

• Question from Germany on deworming of hunted game in Member States and especially in the Czech Republic.

The German delegation asked for further information from the Czech delegation and from other Member States on the deworming of hunted game, since deworming was prohibited under German hunting legislation, but had been found to have been carried out in border regions neighbouring the Czech Republic. The Czech Republic answered that it carried out antiparasitical treatment of wild game based on a previous investigation. The treatment was administered only in February, which is outside the hunting season. The Czech Republic had informed all neighbouring countries about these practices. More detailed information regarding this subject could be obtained from the Czech Ministry of Agriculture if needed.

• Question from Belgium regarding the date of the next meeting of the Hygiene Group.

The next meeting of the Hygiene Group would be on 31 May 2010.

Eric Poutelet
Director
(Signed)