

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH  
HELD ON 24 MAY 2007 IN BRUSSELS  
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)  
(Section Controls & Import Conditions)**

President: Eric Poudelet

All the Member States were present.

**1. EC – US: Equivalence determination exercise for fishery products (GM)**

The Commission representative gave an update of the situation as regards the EC – US equivalence determination exercise for fishery products. Currently US exports of fishery products to the EC must only be accompanied by a public health certification which states that the fishery products comply with US public health standards which have been recognised as equivalent to the EC standards.

The US asked that the Commission to further simplify the administrative procedures for US exports to the EC, as regards all fishery products, except live bivalve molluscs. In reply, the Commission is going to propose to the Food and Drug Administration the use of a traceability document to replace the health certificate.

Furthermore, the use of the TRACES system in which the US authorities are to register all relevant information would clearly show the origin of the product.

Concerning audits by the EU of US exports, the standards used will be the US standards for exports from the US to the EC, and vice versa.

The US are asked to accept the EU production standards as equivalent to their import requirements that could also lead to a simplification of the US administrative procedures.

**2. Presentation and possible approval of the scope of a proposal for the development of a Community guide to good practice for hygiene in flocks of laying hens (KDS)**

The Commission representative presented the common initiative from EUWEP<sup>1</sup> and COPA/COGEPA<sup>2</sup> in developing a Community guide to good practice for hygiene in flocks of laying hens, in accordance with EU new legislation aimed at reducing the prevalence of Salmonellas.

Coordinates of experts in the Member States willing to participate in this initiative are to be transmitted to the Commission. The committee was asked to give its approval on the scope of the proposal.

The Commission took note of all comments made by the MS and explained how itself and Member States should help in ensuring that the Community guide is coherent with EU legislation.

A Working Group will be set up to develop the draft Community guide, which will be presented at the SCFCAH in July 2007. It will then be circulated to stakeholders for comments. It is intended to obtain approval on the guide before the end of 2007. A

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<sup>1</sup> European Union of Wholesale with Eggs, Egg Products, Poultry and Game

<sup>2</sup> Committee of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the EU - General Confederation of Agricultural Cooperatives in the EU (<http://www.copa-cogeca.be/en/>)

financial Decision to support translation and distribution of the guide may be presented after finalisation of the guide.

### **3. Presentation of the Controls database - Availability of data (EUROSTAT)**

Following the conclusions of the CEIES<sup>3</sup> seminar in November 2001, EUROSTAT launched the project "Food safety statistics" in 2002 with the global objective to provide a framework for the quantitative evaluation of data on the safety of products. The project is carried out in co-operation with Member States through collaboration with the "Food safety statistics" Working Group, assisted by Task Forces and Technical Groups.

Co-operation between Commission services is necessary as well, involving DG SANCO and DG AGRI, as well as the European Food Safety Authority and the European Centre for Disease Control.

In particular, since 2005, EUROSTAT receives a copy of the control data sent by Member States to DG SANCO in 6 fields: TSE monitoring, monitoring of pesticide residues, monitoring of residues in live animals and products of animal origin, monitoring of selected zoonoses, official food controls and official controls in animal nutrition. This allows for the development of an internal Controls database, a centralised location for all information on control activities which is at the moment scattered in different DG SANCO services. A third version of the controls database with restricted on-line access will be available mid-July 2007. Member States should let EUROSTAT know of which experts should have access to the database (competent authorities, inspectors,...).

Statistical analysis of the various data will contribute to their harmonisation and structuring through the use of common terminology and dictionaries.

In parallel, EUROSTAT has created the Food database (Food: From farm to fork statistics) which constitutes a single and unique access to all data related to the food chain that are already available from Eurostat's website, aiming at offering the most appropriate date and at structuring the information.

Data from the Controls database can be transferred to the Food database after verification and formal agreement of the relevant national authorities and DG SANCO services.

EUROSTAT 2007 work programme in relation to statistics on control and monitoring activities consists of further developing the controls database, the common terminology and the validation of data for indicators of control activities.

On 1-2 October 2007 a Technical Group will be held on food and feed control and monitoring activities, mainly on the data validation as well as on validation of common definitions and data dictionaries.

The next meeting of the Working Group "Food safety statistics" will take place on 10-11 December 2007.

### **4. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Annexes II, V, VI, VIII, IX and XI to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down rules for the prevention, control and eradication of certain transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (SANCO/3748/2006 Rev. 8) (Right of scrutiny of the European Parliament) (KVD) (see point 12 of the 20 March SCFCAH and point 14 of the 11-12 April SCFCAH)**

During the General Session of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in May 2005, a new simplified procedure for the classification of countries according to their

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<sup>3</sup> European Advisory Committee on Statistical Information in the Economic and Social Spheres

Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) risk based on three categories was adopted. Regulation (EC) No 1923/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 transposed the new simplified categorisation system in Community legislation. Following this amendment, the annexes to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001 should be adapted to the new categorisation system

This proposal has already obtained a favourable technical vote at the 11-12 April SCFCAH (Animal health and welfare section) and was afterwards submitted to SPS consultation. The Commission presented some further amendments brought to the proposal and took note of comments from the committee.

Vote: in favour at the qualified majority, Malta absent and not represented

**5. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision establishing the BSE status of Member States or third countries or regions thereof according to their BSE risk (SANCO/1116/2007 Rev. 1) (Right of scrutiny of the European Parliament) (KVD)**

Categorisation of countries according to their bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) risk aims at establishing trade rules for every risk category that will offer the necessary guarantees for protecting animal and public health. According to Regulation (EC) No 999/2001, transitional measures for certain rules based on classification shall apply until 1 July 2007 at the latest. A decision should therefore be taken to classify countries according to their BSE risk before that date.

The OIE<sup>4</sup> has adopted a resolution classifying Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Uruguay as countries or regions with a negligible BSE risk. Pending adoption by the OIE of a final conclusion on the BSE risk status of the EU Member States and taking into account the harmonised stringent BSE protective measures applied within the European Union, the Member States are provisionally recognised as countries with a controlled BSE risk.

In reply to the concerns of Norway, Iceland and Austria, the Commission added the "EFTA countries"<sup>5</sup> group in the controlled risk category, which includes Norway, Iceland and Switzerland. Lichtenstein is for the time being not classified and falls in the undetermined risk category; after evaluation by the OIE, Lichtenstein could be moved to the EFTA countries.

Vote: in favour at the qualified majority, Malta absent and not represented

**6. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 and Decision 2006/696/EC with regard to placing on the market of eggs from *Salmonella* infected flocks of laying hens (Legal basis: Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003) (Right of scrutiny of the European Parliament) (SANCO/1188/2006 Rev. 13) (KDS) (see point 17 of the 11-12 April SCFCAH and point 1 of the 24-25 April SCFCAH)**

The Commission outlined the amendments made to the proposal taking into account comments sent by the Member States (MS).

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<sup>4</sup> Organisation Mondiale de la Santé Animale – World Organisation for Animal Health (Office international des épizooties)

<sup>5</sup> European Free Trade Association (<http://www.efta.int/>)

MS made additional comments to the proposal which aims at introducing trade restrictions for eggs from salmonella infected flocks, and at advancing to 1 January 2009 the application date of restrictions for eggs from flocks with an unknown health status, suspected of being infected, or infected by *Salmonella* Enteritidis or *Salmonella* Typhimurium.

Further discussions took place, in particular on the marking of infected eggs and its negative economic impact.

The formal vote is planned to be taken at the September SCFCAH.

Technical vote: in favour at the qualified majority, 27 votes abstaining, Malta absent and not represented

**7. 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 *Campylobacter* in broilers and their antimicrobial resistance and on the prevalence of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* in broiler carcasses to be carried out in the Member States (SANCO/3969/2006 Rev. 6) (SI/KDS) (see point 10 of the 20 March SCFCAH and point 4 of the 24-25 April SCFCAH)**

In the report of the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on Trends and Sources of zoonoses, zoonotic agents and antimicrobial resistance in the European Union in 2005<sup>6</sup>, a high number of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* cases in humans were reported, as well as the importance of broilers and broiler meat as source of infection.

Therefore comparable data on the prevalence of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* and their antimicrobial resistance in broilers and broiler meat in the Member States should be collected to consider the need, feasibility, cost and benefit of Community-wide control measures. That survey is meant to provide technical information necessary for the development of Community veterinary legislation.

A Community financial contribution for implementing the specific requirements of the survey should be granted. 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, should not be eligible for any Community financial contribution.

Such financial contribution will 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 conditions, insofar as the actions provided for are effectively carried out and provided that the authorities communicate all the necessary information within the time limits provided for in this Decision.

Vote: in favour at the qualified majority, Malta absent and not represented

**8. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a 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 Rev. 7) (KDS) (see point 8 of the 20 March SCFCAH, point 15 of the 11-12 April SCFCAH and point 6 of the 24-25 April 2007 SCFCAH)**

The health certificates for poultry and hatching eggs laid down in Annex IV to Council Directive 90/539/EEC on animal health conditions governing intra-Community trade in,

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/monitoring\\_zoonoses/reports/zoonoses\\_report\\_2005.html](http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/monitoring_zoonoses/reports/zoonoses_report_2005.html)

and import from third countries of, poultry and hatching eggs, contain requirements with regard to Newcastle disease.

Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the control of *Salmonella* and other specified food-borne agents lays down provisions with regard to intra-Community trade of live poultry and hatching eggs. As from the dates of the start of the *Salmonella* control programmes in different poultry populations, flocks of origin shall be tested for *Salmonella* serotypes of public health significance, prior to any dispatching of the live animals or hatching eggs.

The main purpose of the current draft Decision is to amend the Model health certificates in Annex IV to Directive 90/539/EEC taking into account the requirements in Regulation (EC) No 2160/2003.

In addition, the certificates should be updated

- to delete Denmark from the list of countries with approved non vaccinating status for Newcastle disease;
- to revise the wording of the animal health requirements for Newcastle disease;
- to introduce traceability requirements in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 599/2004 concerning the adoption of a harmonised model certificate and inspection report linked to intra-Community trade in animals and products of animal origin.

In reply to French question, the Commission clarified that if testing results are positive there is no need to specify the type of *Salmonella* as the consequences are the same as regards restrictions.

In reply to Ireland, the Commission confirmed that an additional special certificate is required for exports from the Member States to Sweden and Finland, in the framework of the Treaty of Accession.

Vote: in favour at the qualified majority, Malta absent and not represented

**9. Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 as regards implementing measures for certain products of animal origin intended for human consumption and laying down specific rules on official controls for the inspection of meat (SANCO/2696/2006 Rev. 8) (TEG/RD/TC)**

This proposal aims at amending Regulation (EC) No 2074/2005 laying down implementing measures under the "hygiene package" Regulations and at clarifying under which conditions certain adaptations may be allowed during post-mortem inspections.

The Member States were in general satisfied with the draft and thanked the Commission for its work. However some MS requested the draft to be further discussed at working group level before being presented for a vote.

**10. Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 laying down specific rules on official controls for *Trichinella* in meat (SANCO/99/2007 Rev. 1) (TEG/RD/TC)**

This proposal aims at amending Regulation (EC) No 2075/2005 laying down specific rules on official controls for *Trichinella* in meat by proposing to use liquid pepsin as an alternative to pepsin powder for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae in meat samples. Indeed, reports have been published indicating that pepsin powder may cause allergic reactions in certain susceptible individuals carrying out such detection tests.

## 11. Exchange of views of the Committee on a draft Commission Regulation amending Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 of the European Parliament and the Council laying down specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin (SANCO/140/2007 Rev. 6) (TEG/RD/TC)

Reduction of the administrative burden imposed on enterprises is important for improving their competitiveness and achieving the objectives of the Lisbon agenda.

Under Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 fishing vessels are required to keep and retain records relating to measures put in place to control hazards. Such provisions may create an additional administrative burden for food business operators involved in small-scale coastal fishing, for which it should be appropriate to grant a derogation from these provisions.

Some delegations considered that the proposed derogation should also be granted after a risk assessment. It was therefore decided to go back to the working group to further discuss this issue.

The draft also aims at taking on board the latest scientific information concerning the manufacture of gelatine.

## 12. Miscellaneous

- At the request of France on **anyakis contamination of fish**, the Commission will consult the European Food Safety Authority on the possible exclusion of reared fish from parasites inspection.
- The Netherlands expressed problems in the interpretation of the third countries list as regards **imports of gelatine for human consumption from third countries**. The Commission acknowledged the complexity of interpretation and will further examine the issue with colleagues of the Food and Veterinary Office and provide an answer at a later SCFCAH.
- The Netherlands expressed concerns as regards the entry into force on 31 May 2007 of Decision 2007/275/EC on **imports of composite products**. Problems are indeed expected for implementation by that date. The Dutch delegate asked whether other MS would encounter such problems. The Commission insisted that MS respect that date set in the Decision, which was voted at the SCFCAH meeting of 21 February 2007.
- The German delegate inquired on the steps taken and to take further to the latest mission of the Food and Veterinary Office to **Brazil** in March 2007. The Commission could observe some improvements on residues and traceability, but more work still needs to be done. Brazil has shown its determination to improve the situation. A detailed mission report of the FVO should be available shortly. (RM)
- Germany raised the issue of **imports of game meat** and the quantity of meat from hunted animals that can be brought in the European Union by passengers. The Commission explained that Regulation (EC) No 745/2005 lays down rules to avoid animal diseases being introduced in the EU. Any meat or milk must be accompanied by a health certificate and go through a border inspection post. Germany urged the

Commission to have discussion on this issue to find a practical solution for hunters.  
(WD)

- The Commission reminded Portugal to send in its **list of National Reference Laboratories** and the other Member States to send in any updated information. The complete list of NRLs will be published on DG SANCO website.
- The Commission distributed a note regarding the implementation of Commission Decision 2002/657/EC which ensures a harmonised implementation of Council Directive 96/23/EC on measures to monitor certain substances and residues thereof in live animals and animal products, and regarding the **validation of analytical methods for contaminants**. The Commission clarified that the analytical methods for the substances covered by Regulations (EC) No 401/2006, 1883/2006 and 333/2007 are not subject to Decision 2002/657/EC, as these regulations constitute more specific rules laid down in other Community legislation.

- Statement of the Commission and the Member States

***Amendments to the list of fishery products establishments of Kazakhstan***

*An inspection mission carried out in Kazakhstan from 16 to 21 April 2007 has revealed serious deficiencies not easily rectifiable, as regards the hygienic conditions and the temperature recording, in two establishments producing fishery products.*

*With further communication, the Kazakhstan CVO informed the Commission to have requested to the Ministry of Agriculture of Kazakhstan to delete the two establishments from the fishery establishment list.*

*However, at the moment both these establishments are still on the list of the Kazakhstan fishery products establishments, from which Member States can import fishery products.*

*Therefore, in the light of the information provided by the inspection mission, and in accordance with Art 12.4(c) of Reg. 854/2004, the Commission and the Member States agree that a modification of the Kazakhstan list of fishery products establishments is necessary and that the Commission proceeds with the deletion of the two establishments 03 A "JSC AtyrauBalyk" and 04 AA "Filleting factory of JSC Balyck Product" from the list of the Kazakhstan establishments from which Member States can import fishery products.*

(signed)  
Eric Pondelet  
Acting for the Director