1. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Decision approving programmes for the eradication and monitoring of animal diseases, of certain TSEs, and for the prevention of zoonoses, presented by the Member States for the year 2007 (SANCO/10612/2006) (VP)

This proposal implements Commission Decision 2006/687/EC on programmes qualifying for a Community financial contribution in 2007, which was voted on 22 September 2006, and sets out the reimbursement ceilings for the various programmes entitled to Community funding. The Commission informed the committee that it planned to present a draft proposal for Bulgaria and Romania at the 20 October SCFCAH, after the technical modifications are made as regards enlargement to Council Decision 90/424, Art. 24. The Danish delegate asked for an increase of the amount for TSE, as well as an additional contribution for scrapie because of the 1st case of scrapie on 29 September in Denmark. The decision for approving programmes and allocating the funding being already taken, the Danish request could not be taken into consideration. The Commission provided further clarifications in response to some Member States. It also explained that ceilings were set only when considered sensible, which does not exclude other tests, not specified in the text, to be included in the funding.

It is intended to take this item for vote at the 20 October SCFCAH, Animal health and animal welfare section.


Not all the Member States were able to state their views in the 18 September SCFCAH. The current document presents technical changes. In line with the results of the baseline study showing a high prevalence of salmonella in some Member States the date where eggs from farms infected with Salmonella enteritidis and Salmonella typhimurium cannot be marketed as table eggs but have to go through pasteurisation, should be advanced to 1 February 2008.

In response to the UK the Commission confirmed that discussion would take place with DG AGRI at a later working group meeting as to the effect of the proposed measure on the marketing of eggs.

Austria inquired about the funding arrangements that would be considered as compensation of the impact on laying flocks. The financial unit is reflecting on that issue and should respond shortly.
France and Belgium were concerned that the date should be in 2008 whereas some Member States show high salmonella prevalence. Compensatory measures would be most helpful. France suggested an earlier date for those flocks which were epidemiologically infected. In Belgium vaccination on a voluntary basis has proved efficient. Other Member States did not consider it appropriate to adopt the measure too quickly and pointed out the technical and economic implications. The chairman asked the Member States to state their position once again as regards the possible dates. The Commission will present a draft regulation by the end of 2006, which will give farmers time to prepare for the measure and limit the economic consequences. It will also take into account the draft to be sent by France comprising the 2 date compromise. The Commission is not in favour of waiting until 2010 because of the existing high prevalence (see the report of the European Food Safety Authority: http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/science/monitoring_zoonoses/reports/1541.html).


Article 41 of Regulation (EC) No 882/2004 provides for the development of an integrated multi-annual national control plan by each Member States covering all areas of activity: food and feed law, animal health and animal welfare, and plant health. The document will therefore be presented to the experts of all the sections of the SCFCAH. Good coordination between the national administrations on this issue should be ensured. Final consultation of the committee will occur for all of the fields concerned at the committee meeting on 20 November 2006. The national control plans should serve as a solid basis for controls by the Commission inspection services. The Commission has to give assistance in this process by producing guidelines, which are not legally binding but are to be taken into account by Member States in preparing their national plan. As soon as available language versions will be sent to the Member States for verification of linguistic accuracy.

4. Exchange of views on the investigations in cold stores carried out by Member States at the beginning of 2006 (TEG/PC)

The Commission distributed the document ‘Recent Meat Scandals: Survey of Cold Stores in the EU Member States’. A number of scandals occurred in 2005 and 2006 around cold stores, involving the UK, Germany and Hungary. The issue was discussed at a meeting of the Chief Veterinary Officers on 13 December 2005, which resulted in a letter dated 16 December 2005 in which the Commission requested the Member States to conduct an in-depth survey of all annexed/independent cold stores. To date only 13 the Member States have provided the information. The Commission reminded the remaining 12 MS to send the result of their investigations by 31 October 2006. The objective is to improve the current situation as the Commission is strongly concerned by the recurrence of scandals. Some possible solutions have been discussed: a commercial document containing data in relation to traceability could be introduced; the requirement for a compulsory freezing date and a final consumption date could be introduced, controls should be reinforced, some practices such as the cutting of carcasses should be prohibited, etc. Working groups will be organised in order to find ways to ensure fraud is made more and more difficult to commit. The recent recurrent scandals have led to the checking of all cold stores though they were
not thought to be presenting much risk. The Dutch delegate insisted on ensuring legal clarity so to avoid the producers escaping their responsibilities.

5. Exchange of views on testing for residues of antibiotics in milk (See point 4 of 18 September SCFCAH and point 13 of 6 October SCFCAH) (TC)

The Commission reminded the Member States that given the seriousness of the situation in a UK dairy establishment, it was left no option but to initiate an infringement proceeding against the UK government for failure to enforce Community rules on the hygiene of milk in a correct and timely manner. At the same time, in order to counter the risk posed by non-compliant products produced by this company, an EU-wide restriction on the placing on the market of such products was proposed and voted on 6 October by the standing committee. The Decision was published in the Official Journal of the European Union on 14 October 2006. (http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/lex/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:283:SOM:EN:HTML)

Based on an advice from the Legal Service, the discussion initially planned on 'Strategies for the control of antibiotic residues in bulk milk' was postponed as long as the case before the Court of First Instance is pending. However, when resuming, the Commission indicated that this discussion will be broadened to all stakeholders. The Commission committed itself to restart discussion on mouldy cheese in due time. The British delegate thanked the Commission for its commitments and assured that a response to the infringement procedure is being considered by his authorities and will be sent within the delay.

6. Miscellaneous

- Luxembourg inquired about the provisions under the new hygiene regulations for the trade of unskinned game, notably in terms of documentation and certification. The Commission did not note any indication on the prohibition of that trade in Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 and asked Luxembourg to put more precisely in writing the difficulties it encountered.

- The Netherlands raised the issue of fish products from Indonesia, which was already discussed at earlier committee meetings. Some Member States had been reminded to provide information about tests in order for the Commission to be able to consider any amendment to the provisions with regard to imports from Indonesia. Following the Food and Veterinary Office report, the Commission requested the carrying out of tests at Border Inspection Posts (BIP's). The Member States which did not have any consignment from Indonesia were to notify it. The Commission is awaiting the FVO final report and testing reports from MS by the next SCFCAH meeting. It will then decide whether to apply or not the same course action as for Brazil, i.e. to stop the BIPs checks and to request obligatory testing at the country of origin. (TB)

- Community customs rules are to be amended soon with a vote in the Council in early November with entry into force in 2008. The Dutch delegation requested some clarification on the consequences of such changes on the veterinary import legislation. The Commission was not aware of any significant changes with regard to controls. It assured that close contact is being kept with the customs services and discussion will take place between the veterinary and customs services on the impact of the new Community customs rules.