President: Mr Eric Poudelet for points 1-7 and Mr Nymand-Christensen for points 8-17
All the Member States were present.

1. Information from the Commission concerning the categorisation from countries based on the BSE Status

The Commission informed the Committee of the outcome of the Working Group meeting on 6th May and the proposals to revise Annexes II, V, VIII and IX of the TSE Regulation 999/2001. In addition, the Committee was informed about the forthcoming Working Group meeting to be held on 24th June when the modifications would be further discussed.

2. Information to the Member States on the BSE monitoring programme carried out in 2001

The Commission distributed and presented a report entitled «BSE testing in 2001». The main findings were as follows:

- Out of a total of 8,520,075 tests carried out on bovine animals, 2,153 turned out positive;
- 8,457,539 bovine animals were tested by active surveillance while 3,634 bovine animals were tested in passive surveillance and a further 58,901 animals were tested in the framework of BSE eradication;
- Active monitoring detected 49% of positive cases and passive surveillance detected 51%;
- Positive cases were found in all Member States except Luxembourg and Sweden.

In addition, Ireland presented their latest report on BSE monitoring.

3. Information on the review of the BSE monitoring

This point was withdrawn from the agenda.
4. **Presentation of the report "Trends and Sources of Zoonotic Agents in Animals, Feedingstuffs, Food and Man in the European Union and Norway in 2000"**

A representative from the Community Reference Laboratory (CRL) for Zoonoses in Berlin presented the above report to the Committee. The United Kingdom enquired whether the CRLs had any information on the prevalence of Salmonella Newport in the EU. The Committee were informed that the CRLs do not have detailed information on the Newport variant of Salmonella but could collect such information for discussion at a later date.

5. **At the Request of Belgium, Information on a Complaint from the Belgian Fishermen Against the Belgian Monitoring Program for Marine Biotoxins on Wild Pectinidae and the Absence of Control in the Member States**

The Commission distributed the above complaint and the Belgian delegation explained that as a result of toxins being found in wild scallops, all scallops from the relevant fishing grounds had been blocked pending further analysis before being released. At the request of the Commission, some Member States provided information on whether they carried out such testing and, if so, on their methods of analysis and it was decided that the matter would be discussed at a later date.

6. **At the Request of Belgium, Information on the Application of the European Identification Mark on Fishery Products Originating from Third Countries**

At the request of Belgium, the Commission explained that there was a problem regarding imports from third countries already bearing an EU identification mark. Spain expressed concern that fishery products and poultrymeat may enter the Union with an EU healthmark but this does not provide information on the establishment number. The Commission informed the Committee that this practice was not permitted under Community legislation and that for consignments of fishery products Directive 91/493 specifically stated that any labelling should include the following information:

- the country of dispatch;
- identification of the establishment by its official approval number or, in the case of separate registering of auction or wholesale markets, the registration number of the auction or wholesale market.

It was agreed to place this item on the agenda of a future Committee meeting.
7. **Exchange of Views on the Possible Revision of Commission Decision 2000/75/EC Laying Down Special Conditions on the Import from Third Countries of Star Anise**

Notifications received via the Rapid Alert System for Food (RASFF) revealed several cases of intoxication in humans (notably infants) due to the consumption of infusions containing star anise. Investigations have shown that this problem is due to the partial or total substitution of the edible star anise (Chinese star anise- *Illicium verum*) by the toxic star anise (Japanese star anise- *Illicium anisatum*). These two products are exclusively imported products (mostly from China and Vietnam).

Considering that some Member States had already taken some national measures, and in view of the fact that the presence of Japanese star anise in food presents a potential risk for human health, it was deemed appropriate that a Community measure be taken in order to ensure a uniform approach across the European Community.

The Decision establishes that:

- consignments of star anise imported into the Community for human consumption or to be used as an ingredient in foodstuffs, should be subjected at random to sampling and analysis prior to release for free circulation;
- the competent authorities in third countries should provide documentary evidence to accompany each consignment of star anise originating in or consigned from their countries. The documentation should state that the product is only constituted by star anise and excludes the presence of Japanese star anise which is unfit for human consumption;
- the result of these measures will be evaluated before 1 June 2002 and the measures amended if appropriate.

Since the adoption of Commission Decision 2002/75/EC no case of intoxication in humans has been declared via the RASFF. In the same period, the Commission has not received from the Member States any information about positive control on imported star anise.

The majority of Members States agreed that due to the more frequent imports of star anise during the summer and autumn months, it is appropriate to maintain measures at present in force for a further period of time (at least six months). To date, only one Member State has communicated the results of controls to the Commission via the Rapid Alert System and the Commission requested the other Member States to provide the relevant information on the results of surveillance and control in order to evaluate the situation and take appropriate action in the future.

8. **Information on the State of Play of the Suspension of Imports of Products of Animal Origin from China**

The Commission informed the Member States that a meeting was planned with Chinese experts within next few weeks. This will be the second meeting of the
EC/CN Joint technical group, and it will be held in China, the objective of this group is to identify the origins of the contamination and the measures to put in place to move towards the lifting of the suspension of imports. Member States were requested to notify the Commission whether bilateral discussions were being carried out with the Chinese authorities.

There was no position taken yet on the imports of jelly and honey.

The Commission informed the meeting that this week there would be a meeting in China on the import ban of cosmetics from the EU related to BSE. Member States were asked to inform the Commission on any discussions they would have with Chinese authorities.

Finland commented that dog chews should be added to the list of derogation from China. But the Commission stated that it was unnecessary because this product was not in the scope of the Decision.

Spain and Germany commented on the rushed way in which the document on the Safeguard clause regarding China was presented at the last meeting. The Commission acknowledged the point and said it would take it into consideration for future meetings.

9. INFORMATION ON FALSIFICATION OF HEALTH CERTIFICATES FROM CERTAIN THIRD COUNTRIES

The Commission provided information on certain consignments of beef identified in Greece in August 2001 that were fraudulently certified as of Australian origin but may have come from the Far East. The UK requested details on the date that the fraud was first suspected and asked if copies of the fraudulent certificates could be forwarded to them when available.

10. INFORMATION - DISCUSSIONS WITH THE US ON DECONTAMINATION OF POULTRY MEAT

The Commission informed the Committee about the situation regarding the United States and the decontamination of poultry meat. The Scientific Committee has been consulted on the issue and the United States will submit a further proposal to the Commission.
11. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2001/881/EC as regards the list of border inspection posts agreed for veterinary checks on animals and animal products from third countries (Doc SANCO/10053/2002)

The Commission put forward a proposal to add a border inspection post (BIP) in Scotland to the current list of BIPs approved for veterinary checks on live animals and animal products from third countries.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 1999/120/EC drawing up provisional lists of third country establishments from which the Member States authorise imports of animal casings, with respect to Ukraine. (Doc SANCO/10051/2002 – Rev.1)

The Commission put forward a proposal to add an establishment in the Ukraine to the current list of those third countries that are approved to export natural casings to the EU.

Vote: 80 votes in favour and 7 abstentions.

13. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 97/252/EC drawing up provisional lists of third country establishments from which the Member States authorise imports of milk and milk products for human consumption, with respect to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Doc SANCO/10052/2002 – Rev.1)

The purpose of the draft Decision was to add an establishment in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to the current provisional list of third countries approved to export milk and milk products to the EU.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

14. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision laying down special conditions governing imports of fishery products originating in Bulgaria (Doc SANCO/10066/2002 - Rev. 1)

The purpose of the draft Decision was to lay down detailed rules concerning the importation of fishery products into the Community from Bulgaria.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

The purpose of this proposal was to include Bulgaria in the first part of the list and the United Arab Emirates in the second part.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.


The Commission presented the above proposal to establish import conditions for Japan. The proposal specifies the new competent authority in Japan which will perform the health checks and defines the production area.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.


The purpose of the draft Decision was to include Japan on the list of those third countries authorised to export bivalve molluscs to the EU.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour.

18. MISCELLANEOUS

(1) Italy requested clarification about the labelling of beef from third countries and the fact that the label should only indicate such information as the country of origin and where the animal was slaughtered. The Commission explained that under Article 17 of Regulation (EC) 1760/2000, the derogation for third countries entails compulsory labelling of beef indicating only the non-EC origin and the country of slaughter. However, there is an additional requirement for operators and organisations to obtain approval from the designated competent authority before being entitled to import to the EU. The validity within the Community of an approval granted by a third country is subject to prior notification by the third country to the Commission of certain
information including the procedures and criteria used by the competent authority and the details of each operator or organisation concerned.

(2) Ireland raised the issue of labelling of poultry meat and the fact that a recent study had found high contents of water and collagen in poultry meat imported from third countries and further processed in the EU. The Commission explained that this was not a new issue and that the matter should be discussed at a later date.

(3) The Commission informed the Member States of the outcome of the last meeting held between the Swiss authorities and the European Commission on 17 May 2002. The following points were discussed:

- Changes that have occurred in the acquis communautaire since the conclusion of the sectoral agreement dated 21 June 1999;
- Certificates required for trade in the different animal species and categories of goods between Switzerland and the European Union;
- Integration of Switzerland into the system requiring notification of animal diseases (Annex 1, chapter VIII, B of the Veterinary Agreement);
- ANIMO (Annex 5, chapter 1, I of the Veterinary Agreement);
- Shift (Annex 5, chapter 3, III of of the Veterinary Agreement);
- Trade in horses between Switzerland and the EU (passport for horses with the exception of slaughter horses);
- Border controls (Annex 5, chapter 2, II, B of the veterinary agreement);
- Equivalence of legal provisions in the dairy sector and the impact on certificates (Annex 6, chapter 1 of the veterinary agreement);
- Border grazing land (Annex 5, chapter 1, III of the veterinary agreement);
- B.S.E.;
- Implementation of the Veterinary agreement (draft internal ruling, date of the first meeting);
- Compatibility of the agreement between the European Community and the Swiss Confederation relative to trade exchanges of agricultural products and the agreement relative to the easing of controls and formalities during the transport of goods (working group "veterinary inspections").

(4) The Commission presented an update on the file related to the bilateral agreement on the certification system between the European Union and New Zealand. There is a possibility of granting equivalence on certification for meat and meat products. Dairy products are to be discussed at a later stage. The date of entry into force will be decided shortly and announced in the Official Journal.

(5) Further to an inspection mission by a Commission expert to Brazil to regionalize Brazil for the import of pig meat, many deficiencies were found in the residue sector. In addition, chloramphenicol and nitrofurans’ guarantees could not be given to the EU either. On 12 April, FVO suspicions were confirmed on random testing of poultry meat imports via the Netherlands, where nitrofurans were detected. The Commission stated that restrictive measures could be applied if there were additional findings.
(6) The Commission discussed the old situation on Argentina with regard to a pre-notification due to Foot and Mouth disease. The Argentinians no longer wish to provide a pre-notification as they say that the situation with regard to FMD has now changed favourably. The European Commission is in discussion with the Anti Fraud department (OLAF) to address this issue. The point will be discussed again at the next Committee meeting.

N.B. The proposals on which the Committee expressed an opinion are subject to a defined procedure in relation to the formal adoption by the Commission.

Mission reports are available on the Internet at the following address:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/health/vi/reports/index_en.html

(Signed)
Paola TESTORI COGGI
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