SHORT REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 16 DECEMBER 2002
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)
(Section Controls and Import Conditions)
(Section Animal Health and Welfare)

President: Mr. Eric Poudélet for points 1 to 3, 5 to 8 and 10, Mrs. Patricia Brünko for points 4, 11 and 12, Mr. Michael Scannell for points 9 and 13 to 17, and Mr. Bernard Van Goethem for point 18 to 23.

All the Member States were present.

1. INFORMATION FROM IRELAND ON ITS BSE SITUATION

Ireland announced that case numbers have decreased for 20 weeks ending 15 December 2002 and that the prevalence of BSE test positives have also continued to decrease. The Irish Delegation also announced that the additional controls introduced in 1996/1997 have been effective in preventing exposure, as a shift in the age profile of cases towards older age categories has been observed.

2. INFORMATION ABOUT A MODIFICATION TO THE BIO-RAD PLATELIA BSE TEST

The Commission informed the Member States about the development of a second version of the “Bio-Rad Platelia” test, which has been approved for TSE monitoring of bovine, ovine and caprine animals. The change of the test’s name into “Bio-Rad TeSeE” was also announced.

3. FOOD & VETERINARY OFFICE - PROGRAMME OF INSPECTIONS 2003

The Commission presented to the Member States the Programme of Inspections 2003 of the Food and Veterinary Office (FVO). It includes a detailed programme for January to June 2003 and an outline for the second half of 2003, with a total of around 250 inspections in Member States, Third Countries, and a particular emphasis on Candidate Countries.

The FVO will continue to establish and develop country profiles, in order to avoid that certain aspects of a country’s control system, which are common to the different sectoral areas under inspection, be evaluated more than once in the course of the year.
4. **Final Report of a mission carried out in the United Kingdom from 16 to 26 April 2002 in order to evaluate the control of residues in live animals and animal products (DG (SANCO)/8626/2002-MR Final)**

The Commission reported on the main findings of its mission. The objective of the mission was to carry out an evaluation of the control of residues in live animals and animal products by the British authorities.

5. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Regulation laying down minimum requirements for the establishment of breeding programmes for resistance to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in sheep (Document SANCO 4072/2002 – Rev. 1)**

Following the adoption on 19-20 November 2002 of a Draft Commission Decision laying down minimum requirements for a survey of prion protein genotypes of sheep breeds by 1 July 2003, the Commission presented a new proposal laying down minimum requirements for the establishment of breeding programmes for resistance to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in sheep.

On the basis of the survey’s outcome, each Member State shall introduce, by 1 January 2004, a breeding programme to select for resistance to TSEs in each of its sheep breeds which are native, or which form a significant population in its territory.

Member States may decide that participation in the breeding programme by flock owners shall be voluntary until 1 April 2005.

By 1 January 2004, Member States shall establish a framework for the recognition of the TSE-resistant status of certain sheep flocks. They shall report on the requirements of their breeding programmes by 1 April 2004 and provide their first annual progress report by 1 April 2005. The Commission shall present a summary of the reports within 3 months of the deadline for the receipt of the reports.

**Vote: 83 votes in favour, 4 abstentions (qualified majority)**

The Spanish Delegation made the following declaration:

“It would have been useful, before establishing breeding programmes for resistance to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in sheep, to take into account the results of the survey of prion protein genotypes of sheep breed, in order to ensure a correct enforcement of the programme, both from a zootecnic and epidemiological point of view.

We moreover express our preoccupation for the possible problems that may arise from the lack of a homogeneous and reliable sheep identification system.”

The Commission proposed to amend the rules for the eradication of transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in ovine and caprine animals and rules for the trade in live ovine and caprine animals, as well as bovine embryos.

Consequently, in the case of confirmation of TSE in an ovine or caprine animal, the competent authority may decide to exempt (from the killing and complete destruction of all animals, embryos and ova):

- Breeding rams of the ARR/ARR genotype;
- Breeding ewes carrying at least 1 ARR allele and no VRQ allele; and
- Sheep carrying at least one ARR allele which are intended solely for slaughter.

Moreover, may only be introduced in holdings where destruction has been undertaken:

- Male sheep of the ARR/ARR genotype;
- Female sheep carrying at least 1 ARR allele and no VRQ allele;
- Caprine animals under certain conditions;
- Ovine semen from rams of the ARR/ARR genotype; and
- Ovine embryos carrying at least 1 ARR allele and no VRQ allele.

Also, from holdings where destruction has been undertaken:

- Movement of ARR/ARR sheep shall not be subject to any restriction;
- Sheep carrying only one ARR allele may be moved from the holding only to go directly for slaughter for human consumption or for the purposes of destruction;
- Sheep of other genotypes may only be moved from the holding for the purposes of destruction.

Vote: 80 votes in favour, 3 votes against, 4 abstentions (qualified majority)

Ovine and caprine animals imported into the Community after 1 October 2003 are to be subject to the presentation of an international animal health certificate attesting that either they were born in and continuously reared on holdings in which a case of scrapie has never been diagnosed or are sheep of the ARR/ARR prion protein genotype, coming from a holding where no case of scrapie has been reported in the last 6 months (so they cannot act as fomites).

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**


The Draft Regulation aims at amending rules on the monitoring of bovine, ovine and caprine animals, as well as on specified risk material, mechanically recovered meat and slaughtering techniques.

The vote was postponed until January 2003 and the implementation planned for May 2003.


The Commission presented a draft “Certificate of veterinary checks on products introduced into the EC from thirds countries”.

The vote was postponed until January 2003.

10. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on financial aid from the Community for the operation of certain Community Reference Laboratories in the field of veterinary public health (biological risks) for the year 2003 (Document SANCO/1032/2002 – Rev. 1)**

The Commission presented the work programmes for 2003 of Community Reference Laboratories in the field of Veterinary Public Health (biological risks) and its draft
Decision on financial aid from the Community for the operation of certain community Reference Laboratories in the field of veterinary public health (biological risks) for the year 2003.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**


The Commission presented the work programmes for 2003 of Community reference Laboratories in the field of Veterinary Public Health (residues) and its draft Decision on financial aid from the Community for the operation of certain Community Reference Laboratories in the veterinary public health field (residues) for the year 2003.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**


The Commission presented a Draft Decision as regards the setting of Minimum Required Performance Limits (MRPLs) for certain residues in food of animal origin.

Concerning Chloramphenicol, the MRPL for meat, eggs, milk, urine, aquaculture products and honey was set at 0.3 ng/g.

Concerning Medroxyprogesterone Acetate, the MRPL for fat from pig kidney was set at 1 ng/g.

Concerning metabolites from the furazolidone, furaltadone, nitrofurantoine and nitrofurazone nitrofuranes, the MRPL for poultry meat and aquaculture products was set at 1 ng/g for each of them.

**The Committee gave a favourable vote by unanimity**
13. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Decision, amending Decision 97/468/EC on drawing up provisional lists of third country establishments from which the Member States authorise imports of wild game meat, with respect to Estonia and Namibia (Document SANCO/10488/2002)**

The Commission presented a Draft Decision adding the AS Villem Lihakaup Abattoir, from Estonia, and the State Veterinary Marintal Abattoir, from Namibia, to the list of third country establishments from which the Member States authorise imports of wild game meat, with some restrictions.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**

14. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Decision amending Decision 95/340/EC drawing up a provisional list of third countries from which Member States authorise imports of milk and milk-based products, with respect to Netherlands Antilles. (Document SANCO/10589/2002 – Rev. 1)**

The Commission presented a Draft Decision adding the Netherlands Antilles to the list of third countries from which Member States authorise imports of milk and milk-based products.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**

15. **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 Member States authorise imports of milk and milk products for human consumption, with respect to Netherlands Antilles (Document SANCO/10588/2002)**

The Commission presented a Draft Decision adding the Dutch Antillean Dairy Industry N. V., from the Netherlands Antilles, to the list of third country establishments from which Member States authorise imports of milk and milk products for human consumption.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**
16. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2002/69/EC concerning certain protective measures with regard to the products of animal origin imported from China (Document SANCO/10696/2002 – Rev. 1)**

Decision 2002/69/EC provides that it shall be reviewed in light of the information provided by the competent authorities of China, the results of the checks carried out on consignments arriving to Community border inspection posts and, if necessary, on the basis of the results of a new Community inspection visit. The information provided by the Chinese authorities and the results of the checks carried out by Member States have allowed to authorise the import of certain products of animal origin and therefore to modify several times Decision 2002/69/EC.

Furthermore, and in view of the more recent information provided by the Chinese authorities, fishery products obtained by other means than aquaculture are not concerned by the risks identified above and should therefore be authorised. However, for eels and shrimps, the distinction between aquaculture and wild catches is not possible for the time being, except for catches of shrimps made in the Atlantic Ocean. Those products should therefore remain prohibited, except for the later category of crustacean.

The objective of the present proposal is to update and consolidate the provisions of Decision 2002/69/EC, as well as to repeal Decisions 2001/669/EC and 2002/69/EC accordingly.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**

17. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2002/251/EC concerning certain protective measures with regard to poultrymeat and certain fishery and aquaculture products intended for human consumption and imported from Thailand (Document SANCO/10697/2002 – Rev. 1)**

Decision 2002/251/EC provides that it will be reviewed on the basis of the guarantees provided by the competent authorities of Thailand and on the basis of the results of the tests carried out by Member States. The Thai authorities have provided the appropriate guarantees and, in particular, they have guaranteed that all the consignments certified by the competent authority since 21 September 2002 are submitted to a systematic pre-shipment check, in order to control the presence of nitrofurans and their metabolites. They have also guaranteed that only the consignments which are free of such substances are authorised for export to the Community. The results of the checks carried out by Member States in shrimps imported from Thailand have been favourable. However, the checks carried out in poultry shows that it is necessary to continue the systematic checks of these products until the results show that the pre-shipment checks carried out in Thailand are effective.
The present proposal aims at revoking the systematic checks imposed on all the consignments of shrimps certified by the Thai authorities after 21 September 2002, as having been submitted to a systematic pre-shipment check to control the presence of nitrofurans and their metabolites.

The vote was postponed until January 2003.


The Commission presented a Draft Decision concerning a financial contribution towards the operational costs related to the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in the Netherlands in 2001.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**


The Commission presented a Draft Decision concerning a financial contribution towards the operational costs related to the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in Ireland in 2001.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**


The Commission presented a Draft Decision concerning a financial contribution towards the operational costs related to the eradication of foot-and-mouth disease in France in 2001.

**Vote: unanimous vote in favour**

21. **Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision establishing the eligible expenditures of the Community Reference Laboratories receiving financial assistance under Article 28 of Decision 90/424/CEE and establishing the**
PROCEDURES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF EXPENDITURES AND AUDITS (DOCUMENT SANCO/1019/2002 – Rev. 2)

The Commission presented a Draft Decision establishing the eligible expenditures of the Community reference laboratories receiving financial assistance and establishing the procedures for the submission of expenditures and audits.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour


The Commission presented a Draft Decision designating a specific institute responsible for establishing the criteria necessary for standardising the serological tests to monitor the effectiveness of rabies vaccines, as regards the agreement of laboratories in third countries.

Vote: unanimous vote in favour

23. OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON:

- DRAFT COMMISSION DECISION AMENDING DECISION 2002/673/EC ON THE APPROVAL OF PROGRAMMES FOR SURVEYS IN POULTRY AND WILD BIRDS (DOCUMENT SANCO/10552/2002 – REV. 2)

Vote: unanimous vote in favour


Vote: unanimous vote in favour


Vote: unanimous vote in favour

Vote: 83 votes in favour, 4 abstentions (qualified majority)

- **Draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2001/618/EC to include certain departments of France in the lists of Member States and regions free of Aujeszky’s disease and regions where approved Aujeszky’s disease eradication programmes are in place** *(Document SANCO/10568/2002)*

The vote was postponed until January 2003.

24. **Miscellaneous**

   (1) The German delegation signalled irregularities in the implementation of BSE tests in some German private laboratories;

   (2) The Dutch Delegation expressed its doubts about the confidentiality of some of the information sent though the Rapid Alert System;

   (3) The Commission distributed a draft proposal from the group of experts of 13 December 2002 on Boldenone. This issue will be on the agenda in January 2003.

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/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/index_en.html](http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/inspections/vi/reports/index_en.html)

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