President: Eric Pbourne for point 1, Patricia Brunko for point 2, Michael Scannel for points 4 and 5, Bernard Van Goethem for point 6.
All the Member States were present.
All the Acceding States were present, except Cyprus, Malta and Slovakia

1. **DRAFT REPORT ON THE MONITORING AND TESTING OF RUMINANTS FOR THE PRESENCE OF TSE IN THE EU IN 2003, INCLUDING THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF PRION PROTEIN GENOTYPES IN SHEEP BREEDS (KDS)**

The Commission informed the Member States’ and Acceding States’ representatives that the draft report had been forwarded to the CVOs and that it had been presented at the SCFCAH of 17 March 2004.

The Member States were requested to forward possible comments the Commission before end April 2004.

All delegations agreed to the publication of the report.

2. **PRESENTATION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS OF AN FVO MISSION TO INDIA TO ASSESS THE CONTROL SYSTEM IN PLACE TO PREVENT SUDAN DYE IN CHILI AND CHILI PRODUCTS, AND AFLATOXINS IN SPICES AND UPDATE ON THE QUARTERLY REPORTS SUBMITTED BY THE MEMBER STATES (XP)**

The point was withdrawn from the agenda. The FVO report had not yet been finalised.

In follow-up to Decisions 2003/460/EC and 2004/92/EC, the Commission distributed and presented a document “**RASFF notifications concerning positive tests of Sudan dyes in chilli and chilli products**”, covering the period June 2003 to April 2004. The Member States were also presented with an overview of negative analytical results reported on Sudan 1 in 2003.

The Member States will be kept regularly informed on further developments.

3. **DISTRIBUTION POUR INFORMATION / DISTRIBUTION FOR INFORMATION:**

- Report of a mission carried out in Estonia from 19 to 23 January 2004 in order to follow-up the review of the plan submitted by the Estonian authorities for the
upgrading of fishery product and poultry meat establishments [DG(SANCO)/7220/2004-MR]

- Report of a follow-up mission carried out in Cyprus from 16 to 20 February 2004 concerning bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) and animal nutrition [DG (SANCO)/7206/2004-MR]


In order to allow some national reference laboratories for the detection of residues in the New Member States to prepare the development of their analytical methods to be in full compliance with Directive 96/23/EC, the Commission proposed to grant these laboratories a transitional period enabling them to make the necessary preparations. The laboratories concerned have given reliable guarantees of the existence of the necessary agreements with other laboratories in the EC which will carry out the necessary tasks during that time. The transitional period was proposed to be limited to a maximum of 12 months, expiring on 01 May 2005.

**Unanimous vote in favour.**

All the Acceding States present also supported the proposal.


The Commission explained that the Czech Republic, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and the Slovak Republic have been granted a transitional period for structural requirements in certain establishments processing products of animal origin. The transitional regime requires in particular that products originating from those establishments shall only be placed on the domestic market in the respective New Member States.

The draft Regulation presented lays down detailed implementing rules applicable to the placing on the market and the further processing of products of animal origin which originate from establishments in transition in the New Member States mentioned above.

The vote was postponed.

It had appeared that following the adoption of Decision 2004/215/EC, problems in relation with intra-Community trade had been encountered regarding bovine animals originating in Member States of different status with regard to infectious bovine rhinotracheitis. The Member States were therefore presented a draft Decision aiming to limit the impact on trade while securing the success of the approved German programme, and consequently repeal Decision 2004/215/EC.

**Vote: 66 votes in favour, 18 abstentions, 3 votes absent.**

However, it appeared from the exchange that further in-depth discussion was needed to clarify the situation. The Committee agreed to organise a working group for that purpose. The Commission proposed that all MS and Germany in particular would apply the newly voted draft Decision pending reflection and preparation of a more suitable proposal. The German delegation supported this approach.

7. **MISCELLANEOUS**

(1) A question from the UK concerning certification for beef imported from third countries was solved bilaterally.

(2) Italy said that consultation of the Polish website revealed that Poland apparently allowed imports of beef and pork from third countries where a Community ban is in place. The Polish delegation said to have some delay in updating the website and that this would be rectified.

(3) Belgium said that consumers and consumer associations are very interested in the current state of play as regards the Commission’s position as regards the addition of water to poultry meat. The Commission replied that a working document was in an advanced stage of preparation and that it would be issued formally soon.

(4) The Commission declared to have received notifications form OLAF concerning increased attempts to import poultry meat from China, which is currently banned. The Commission’s representative appealed to the Acceding States to be aware of the possibility of attempted diversion to their countries and to refuse any consignments of poultry meat from China.

(5) The Commission requested to know the Member States’ and Acceding States’ views, in writing, whether to apply the Community mark or the national mark on matured ham, matured cheese,… produced before 1 April 2004 and for which the process was not completed after 1 May 2004.
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

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