SUMMARY RECORD
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 28 JANUARY 2004
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)
(Section Controls and Import Conditions)
(Section Animal Health)

President: Eric Poudelet for points 1, 3, 7-10; Michael Scannel for points 2, 4-6 & 10,
Bernard Van Goethem for point 10.
All the Member States were present.

1. Information on the BSE situation in the United States of America

The Commission informed the Member States on a Holstein cow in the State of Washington, which has tested positive for BSE. The affected cow was imported from Canada in 2001 and was 6-1/2 years old. The Commission distributed to the Member States a document outlining the history of the case, the measures taken by the US Authorities and the reaction of the Canadian Authorities.

2. Presentation of the FVO Inspection Programme for 2004 (CMT/2004/181)

The Commission’s Food and Veterinary Office (FVO) presented to the Member States its Inspection Programme for 2004. 250 missions are planned in 2004, 134 of which are planned in the first half of 2004 (83% in food safety and animal health, 70% in animal welfare and 10% in plant health). 46% of the missions will cover Member States, 34% Acceding States, 4% veterinary agreement countries and 16% other third countries.

3. Distribution pour information / Distribution for information:

- Report of a mission to Slovenia from 24 to 26 November 2003 concerning import controls (CMT/2004/182)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision aiming at reducing from 100% to 20% the consignments of poultry meat, poultry meat products and poultry meat preparations imported from Brazil subjected to a chemical test, in order to ensure that the products concerned do not present a hazard to human health, and in particular with a view to detecting the presence of nitrofurans and their metabolites

Vote: 67 votes in favour, 10 abstention & 10 votes against (qualified majority)

5. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on the list of establishments in Latvia approved for the purpose of importing fresh meat into the Community (Document SANCO/10021/2004 – CMT/2004/185)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision adding the JSC “Ruks” (Cesis, Cesis District) and Farm “Lankalni” (Dzeldas Village, Nikraces, Kuldigas District) establishments to the list of establishments in Latvia approved for the purpose of importing fresh meat into the Community.

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour

6. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision establishing additional guarantees regarding salmonella for consignments to Finland and Sweden of laying hens (codification of Decision 95/161/EC – CMT/2004/186)

The Commission presented to the Member States a codified version of Decision 95/161/EC establishing additional guarantees regarding salmonella for consignments to Finland and Sweden of laying hens.

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision approving species of necrophagous birds in Greece for the feeding with certain Category 1 materials: black vulture, bearded vulture, griffon vulture, Egyptian vulture, Golden eagle, Imperial eagle, white-tailed eagle and black kite.

The Commission presented to the Member States, for their commenting, a draft Regulation approving, under certain conditions and for certain categories of materials, the processes of alkaline hydrolysis, high pressure high temperature hydrolysis, high pressure hydrolysis biogas, biodiesel production and Brookes gasification. The draft also amends Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 as regards biogas transformation and processing of animal fat, which is necessary as a consequence of the approval of the above processes.


The Commission presented to the Member States, for their commenting, a draft Regulation laying down the parameters for Method 6 of Annex V of Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 for the processing of animal by-products of fish origin.

10. Miscellaneous/Divers

- Avian Influenza

The Commission reported to the Member States on the evolution of Avian Influenza in several Asian countries.

The Commission further reminded the Member States that the importation of birds other than poultry is authorised from all member countries of the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) and subject to animal health guarantees provided by the country of origin and to strict post-import quarantine measures in the Member States, thus preventing the possible introduction of poultry diseases into Community poultry flocks.

Given the exceptional disease situation concerning avian influenza in several Asian countries and the potential serious consequences related to the specific avian influenza virus strains involved, some Member States asked the Commission for an additional precautionary measure, in order to exclude any possible risk for disease occurrence in quarantine stations under the authority of the Member States.

In order to address this concern, the Commission proposed to suspend the importation of live birds other than poultry, and also of pet birds accompanying their owner into the European Union from Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos,
Pakistan, The people’s Republic of China (including the territory of Hong Kong), South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam.

The Commission therefore presented to the Member States a **draft Decision concerning protective measures in relation to avian influenza in certain Asian countries as regards the importation of birds other than poultry.**

**Vote: Unanimous vote in favour**

The Member States agreed that the measures taken offered sufficient guarantees and committed not to implement additional measures others than those adopted by the Commission.

- The Commission gave some preliminary information on a mission to Chile from 1 to 12 December 2003 in particular as regards residue control. The draft report will be finalised shortly and sent to the Chilean Authorities for their review.

- The Commission reported on the control of residues in Argentina and on the prohibition of hormones by the Argentinean Authorities.

- The Commission reported to the Member States on the implementation of the animal by-products Regulation (EC) N. 177/2002, and requested the Member States that had not yet done so to inform the Commission of the measures taken to ensure compliance with the Regulation by 13 February 2004. The Commission aims at submitting a report on the matter to the European Parliament and the Council towards the end of February.

- The Commission reported on a net of distribution of illegal veterinary medicines and growth promoters in Spain and Andorra.

  The Spanish Authorities had informed the Commission on 21 January 2003 that on 19 January 2003 the Spanish Police, in coordination with the Police from Andorra, had dismantled two important nets of distribution of illegal substances. Among the substances identified are: dexamethasone, flumetasone and other corticosteroids, trenbolone, oestradiol and clenbuterol. Laboratory equipment and materials for the preparation of the substances were also seized. 18 persons are under investigation. Samples from animals under suspicion as well as water and feed samples are currently being analysed in the Centro Nacional de Alimentación of the Spanish Food Safety Authority. The Spanish delegation informed that there are no indications that the net was extended to other Member States.

- The Norwegian Delegation informed the Commission, as well as the Member and Acceding States, of the nomination of Karen Baar-Yacov as Chief
Veterinary Officer for both animal health and public health matters, following
the creation of the Norwegian Food Safety Authority on 01 January 2004. The
Authority represents a merger of the Norwegian Animal Health Authority, the
Norwegian Agricultural Inspection Service, the Norwegian Food Control
Authority, the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries’ Seafood Inspectorate, as
well as the Norwegian local government food control authorities.

- The Italian Delegation reported on the finding of scrapie in some 20-month to 7-
  year old sheep of the RQ genotype in Italy.

- The French Delegation reported on the presence of atypical BSE cases in
  France.

- The Swedish Delegation reported on the measures taken following a case of
  NOR 98 (atypical TSE) in a nine-year-old ewe in Sweden.

- The German Delegation reported on shortcomings in BSE tests on slaughtered
  bovines in Germany and informed the Commission and the other Member
  States on the measures taken with respect to the meat of bovines slaughtered
  without BSE test.

- The Cypriot Delegation made a presentation on the species of vultures that can
  be found in Cyprus.

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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Director