1. Information on the Joint Management Committee for the veterinary agreement with New Zealand planned for 1-2 June 2004 in Brussels (WMM)

The Commission presented to the Member States:

- The minutes of the 22 March 2004 EU/NZ Veterinary Agreement’s Technical workgroup (Document SANCO/10195/2004);
- The draft minutes of 10 May 2004 meeting of the EU/NZ Veterinary Agreement’s Technical workgroup (Document SANCO/10311/2004);
- The draft annotated agenda of the 1-2 June 2004 Joint Management Committee EU/NZ Veterinary Agreement;
- The draft Commission Decision amending for the second time Decision 2003/56/EC on health certificates for the importation of live animals and animal products from New Zealand.

Furthermore, the Commission asked the Member States to identify possible future work under the EU/NZ Veterinary Agreement.


The Community Reference Laboratory for the Epidemiology of Zoonoses (the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment, in Berlin) presented to the Member States the trends and sources of zoonotic agents in animals, feedingstuffs, food and man in the European Union and Norway in 2002. The main problems reported are the lack of harmonisation of national activities (different monitoring approaches, test methods not harmonised, different ways of presented results), as well as the timeliness of reporting (reports sent a few months after the deadline and adjustments sent until March 2004).
3. Information on products refused by a Member State in the framework of intra-Community trade (AMR)

The Commission discussed with the Member States on how to consider products, in which the presence of pathogenic micro-organisms has been revealed, as far as intra-Community trade is concerned.

In respect of the Treaty and particularly of its Article 30 and of consumer protection, Member States are free to set the acceptable limits of pathogenic micro-organisms at national level, as long as the matter has not been harmonised by European legislation, which is the case for limits of salmonella and listeria.

If a check carried out by a Member State reveals that foodstuffs from another Member States do not fulfil its national requirements as far as pathogenic microorganisms are concerned, the three following solutions are open:

1. The receiving Member State can declare these foodstuffs unfit for human consumption and consequently they are considered as animal by-products of category 2 according to Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002;

2. The competent authority of the receiving Member State can authorise the reprocessing of foodstuffs in an appropriate manner in order to ensure their safety;

3. With the agreement of the Member State of origin, the consignment can be resent. After another check of the microbiological situation of foodstuffs in order to ensure consumer protection, the competent authority of the Member State of origin can allow the marketing as such of the products in a Member State whose requirements are fulfilled by the consignment, OR can give its authorization for the reprocessing of foodstuffs in order to ensure their safety, OR can consider them unfit for human consumption.

4. Information on water-retention agents in poultry meat (AMR)

Point removed from the agenda.

5. Presentation of the SPS export problems data-base (JS)

The Commission presented its objectives for the resolution of SPS export problems experienced with third countries within the framework of the SPS Agreement. A feedback information system will be developed, in which both the private industry and the competent authorities of the affected Member States will be continuously updated on the actions taken, or any progress obtained for the resolution of the SPS export problems.

In order to do so, the Commission ought to have a complete overview of the SPS export problems in the Member States and update the database continuously. Moreover, its needs to assess the information provided and identify the export
cases in which third countries are not in compliance with International trade agreements (SPS) or lack scientific bases.

6. Information on a possible co-operation with CEN in the food and feed safety area (SM)

The Commission informed the Member States on a positive preliminary meeting with the European Normalisation Committee (CEN) for collaboration possibilities in the field of controls.

7. Distribution pour information


8. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision laying down implementing rules as regards the products of animal origin covered by the transitional regime foreseen for certain establishments in the future Member States (Document SANCO/10742/2003) (JG)

Point removed from the agenda

9. 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 (Document SANCO/10314/2004) (NGB)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision adding the Koper (Slovenia), Grebneva (Latvia) and München (Germany) to the list border inspection posts agreed for veterinary checks on animals and animal products from third countries.

Vote: 117 votes in favour, 7 votes absent (qualified majority)

10. Miscellaneous

- State of play on “clear smoking” of tuna

The Commission recalled the previous conclusions of the Committee that fresh fish cannot be subjected to a treatment which is not scientifically recognised or formally approved, that carbon monoxide is not authorised as a food additive and that clear smoke technology is considered to be an indirect way of adding carbon monoxide to food, and finally that, if a product has not been smoked and does not have a smoky flavour, it cannot be labelled as
smoked. Moreover, the Commission highlighted the need for Member States to carry out controls in such a way as to ensure a level playing field.

- The Commission informed the Member States that they would soon be requested to nominate crisis coordinators, as part of the general plan for crisis management, as specified in Regulation (EC) 178/2002 laying down the general principles and requirements of food law, establishing the European Food Safety Authority and laying down procedures in matters of food safety.

- The Commission informed the Member States of the creation of a new unit in Eurostat, responsible for the collection of statistics in the fields of food safety and health. The Commission specified that there would be no duplication in the provision of statistics to DG SANCO and Eurostat.

- The Greek Delegation informed the European Commission and the Member States on the presence of high levels of biotoxines in bivalve molluscs in 3 prefectures in the North of Greece.

- The French Delegation informed the Commission and the Member States of the suspension of imports of fishery products into France from Armenia, Angola and Cameroon.

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)