SHORT REPORT
OF THE
STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE FOOD CHAIN AND ANIMAL HEALTH
HELD IN BRUSSELS ON 20-21 MAY 2003
(Section Biological Safety of the Food Chain)
(Section Controls and Import Conditions)

President: Mr. Eric Poudelet for points 1-2, 6-9, 15; Ms Patricia Brunko for points 3-5a & 10, Michael Scannel for points 11-14 & 16, Robert Vanhoorde for point 17

All the Member States were present.

1. **Presentation of the report on the monitoring and testing of ruminants for the presence of TSE in 2002**

The Commission presented the completed Report on the Monitoring and Testing of Ruminants for the Presence of Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) in 2002, which will soon be published.

This report provides an overview of the results of the surveillance in 2002 similar to the corresponding report for 2001. Apart from some minor changes, the monitoring programme in bovine animals has remained the same since July 2001. It has therefore been possible to evaluate the evolution over one year by comparing the results of the last semester of 2001 to the corresponding results of 2002. Comparisons can also be made between the 2001 and 2002 results within the same target group (e.g. healthy slaughtered cattle) and, preferably, within the same age group. The overall comparisons seem to indicate that the overall BSE situation is improving, proving that the measures taken in the past are having some effects.

2. **Community report on trends and sources of zoonotic agents in animals, feedingstuffs, food and man in the European Union and Norway in 2001**

The Commission presented Document SANCO/56/2003 on Trends and sources of zoonotic agents in animals, feedingstuffs, food and man in the European Union and Norway in 2001. It is an evaluation of the trend reports provided for the year 2001 by the Member States and Norway to the European Commission, in accordance with Article 5 of the Directive 92/117/EEC. It was prepared and presented to the Member States by the Community Reference Laboratory on the Epidemiology of Zoonoses, BfR, Berlin, Germany.

3. **Information from the experts meeting on boldenone held on 13 May 2003**

The Commission informed the Member States about the outcome of the meeting of 13 May 2003. The expert report co-ordinated by Professor De Brabander was
finalised during this meeting. It will be available soon and will constitute the final version of the "basis of the current knowledge".

Experiments on phytosterols are under way. The results will be sent to Pr De Brabander, who will then prepare an addendum to the report.

4. **Information on the part of the Portuguese authorities on the contamination of certain rearings of poultry by nitrofuranes**

The Portuguese delegation presented an update of the situation with regard to the discovery of nitrofuran residues in poultry and distributed a progress report.

All the suspected animals were slaughtered and destroyed, as well as the suspected feed.
All the samples have now been analyzed by Portugal. The results from the laying hen sector are all negative. All the samples carried out in the framework of the action plan since May 2003 have been negative.
The Portuguese authorities have authorised their producers to restart production.

The Commission requested again an information from Portugal on the level of contamination found in feed and about the origin of the nitrofurans.
The Commission reminded the Portuguese delegation to submit a progress report before the 17-18 June 2003 SCFCAH.

5. **Distribution for information / Distribution pour information:**

- Report of a mission carried out in Latvia from 24 to 28 March 2003 in order to evaluate the implementation of certain measures aimed at the eradication, control and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathies (BSE) and the system of controls applied in the sector of animal nutrition (DG(SANCO)/9010/2003)

- Report of a mission carried out in Lithuania from 24 to 28 March 2003 in order to evaluate the implementation of certain measures aimed at the eradication, control and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathies (BSE) and the system of controls applied in the sector of animal nutrition (DG(SANCO)/9011/2003)

- Report of a mission carried out in Romania from 24 to 28 March 2003 in order to evaluate the implementation of certain measures aimed at the eradication, control and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathies (BSE) and the system of controls applied in the sector of animal nutrition (DG(SANCO)/9022/2003)

- Report of a mission carried out in Bulgaria from 24 to 28 March 2003 in order to evaluate the implementation of certain measures aimed at the eradication, control and prevention of bovine spongiform encephalopathies (BSE) and the system of controls applied in the sector of animal nutrition (DG(SANCO)/9023/2003)
5.a Information on the part of the Belgian authorities on the contamination of egg powders by nitrofuranes. Follow up of the situation in the other Member States

The Commission will prepare tables for the Member States to report their results, following their controls carried out in the egg sector. The completed tables will be sent as soon as possible and in any event well in time before the 17-18 June 2003, in order to allow for fruitful discussion.


The Member States made a technical vote on this Decision at the 20 February 2003 SCFCAH and it was subsequently sent to SPS for notification. The Commission informed the Member States that part of the original proposal amending Annex X had been removed (as it had already been adopted as part of another proposal at the 15-16 April 2003 SCFCAH).

Vote: 83 votes in favour, 4 votes against (Qualified majority)


The Commission presented to the Member States, for a technical vote, an amendment to regulation (EC) No 999/2001 as regards rules for importation of live animals and products of animal origin, withdrawing Costa Rica from the list of countries exempted from certain TSE-related trade conditions for live bovine animals and products of bovine, ovine and caprine origin.

Technical Vote: Unanimous vote in favour
Submitted to SPS for notification


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Regulation on transmissible spongiform encephalopathies and animal feeding for a final review by the Member States. The later expressed their overall satisfaction with the draft while outlining some possible implementation problems. The Commission therefore postponed the proposed date of entry into force to September 2003. The
Decision will be proposed for a formal vote of the Member States at the 17 June 2003 SCFCAH.

9. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision on the authorisation of certain alternative methods to be used in microbiological testing of meat intended for Finland and Sweden (SANCO/1769/2003)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft decision authorising the use in microbiological testing of:
- methods, which have been validated against the latest editions of ISO 6579 standard or method No 71 of the Nordic Committee on Food Analyses (NMKL) and certified by a third party in accordance with the protocol set in the latest edition of EN/ISO 16140 standard;
- pending experience from the application of EN/ISO 16140 standard, methods, which have been validated against the above-mentioned analytical methods and certified to provide equivalent guarantees in accordance with protocols described by the Association Française de Normalisation (AFNOR), the Nordic System of Validation of Alternative Microbiological Method (NordVal) or the Association of Official Analytical Chemists (AOAC).

Vote: 77 votes in favour, 10 abstentions (qualified majority)


The purpose of the draft Decision was to update the provisional list of third countries complying with Directive 96/23/EC as regards the approval of residue monitoring plans.

Vote: 77 votes in favour, 10 abstentions (qualified majority)

Declaration from Germany (official translation from German)

"Article 29 of the residue monitoring Directive does not provide for the provisional approval of third-country residue monitoring plans.

Germany welcomes the Commission's intensive efforts to thoroughly analyse and evaluate the plans of third countries, but takes the view that the system of provisional approval currently practised under Article 29 of Directive 96/23/EC should be transformed into a system of final approval."

11. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a Draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2001/881/EC drawing up a list of
border inspection posts approved for veterinary checks on animals and animal products from third countries, and 2002/459/EC listing the units in the ANIMO computer network (Document SANCO/10215/2003)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision amending the list of border inspection posts approved for veterinary checks on animals and animal products from third countries and the list of units in the ANIMO computer network.

Vote: 82 votes in favour, 5 votes absent (qualified majority)

12. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Decision 2001/338/EC concerning certain protective measures with regard to bivalve molluscs from or originated in Peru (Document SANCO/10262/2003)

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision concerning certain protective measures with regards to bivalve molluscs from or originated in Peru, adding two new aquaculture areas (La Mina/Bahia Lagunilla and Isla Tortuga) to the list of specific aquaculture areas from which Member States could accept Pectinidae products, provided that they are eviscerated.

Vote: 82 votes in favour, 5 votes absent (qualified majority)

13. Exchange of views and possible opinion of the Committee on a draft Commission Decision amending Annexes to the Agreement between the European Community and New Zealand on sanitary measures applicable to trade in live animals and animal products (Document SANCO/10247/2003)

The point was postponed until the 17 June 2003 SCFCAH.


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision extending the provisional period during which Member States shall authorise the importation of live animals and animal products set out in Annex I of Decision 2003/56/EC, under the models of certificates previously applicable until 30 September 2003.

Vote: 82 votes in favour, 5 votes absent (qualified majority)

15. Exchange of views on preliminary draft measures implementing Regulation (EC) No 1774/2002 as regards alternative processes, milk and milk products, former foodstuffs, organic fertilisers and soil improvers
The following points were discussed:

- Draft Commission Regulation implementing and amending Regulation (EC) No.1774/2002 as regards organic fertilisers and soil improvers. This draft Regulation provides for a new definition of "pastureland" and lays down provisional measures for the application of certain organic fertilisers such as compost and/or digestion residues and soil improvers on pastureland, pending the advice of the EFSA.

- Draft Commission Regulation implementing Regulation (EC) No.1774/2002 as regards the approval of other means of disposal or uses of animal by-products. This draft Regulation provides for the rules to approve alternative means of disposal and ways of using Category 1, 2 and 3 ABP respectively, after consultation of the SSC.

- Draft Commission Regulation amending and implementing Regulation (EC) No.1774/2002 as regards former foodstuffs, other uses of milk and milk-based products. This draft Regulation provides for a definition of former foodstuffs and lays down provisional measures for the collection, transport and uses of milk and milk-based products other than those provided for in Regulation (EC) No.1774/2002.

16. Exchange of views on the import conditions inside the Community of certain bivalve molluscs coming from areas where paralysing toxin levels exceed the limit set by Directive 91/492/CEE. Request for information from the Spanish authorities. Possible modification of Decision 96/77/CE

The Commission recalled the Spanish Authorities about their request to provide the results of the implementation of Decision 96/77 and the results of the analytical controls carried out in the bivalve mollusc: Acanthocardia tuberculatum (corruco), following the implementation of the mentioned decision.

17. Exchange of views on a draft Commission Regulation on the procedure applied by the European Food Safety Authority to requests for scientific opinions referred to it

Article 29 of Regulation (EC) 178/2002 of the European Parliament and the Council of 28 January 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, foresees that the implementation modalities of this article, concerning the procedure applied by the Authorities to requests for scientific opinions referred to it, are set by the Commission following the consultation of the Authority.

The modalities set by the Commission for the application of Article 29 were presented to the Committee by the new Unit of the Commission’s Health and
Consumer Protection Directorate General (SANCO D.5), responsible for the Commission’s relations with EFSA. The final proposal will be presented for an opinion of the Committee at the 17-18 June 2003 Meeting.

18. Miscellaneous – Divers

The Commission informed the Member States of a case of TSE in Canada, found in an 8 year-old cow in the Province of Alberta.

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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