President: Michael Scannell  
All the Member States were present.

1. FVO Programme of Inspections for 2005 (AL)

The Food and Veterinary Office presented to the Member States its “Programme of Inspections for 2005”. It presents a detailed inspection programme for January to June 2005 and an outline programme for the second half of the year. It is estimated that around 240 inspections will be completed during this 12 month period. 138 inspections are planned for the first semester of 2005, 124 of which in “Food Safety and Animal Health”, 7 in “Animal Welfare” and 7 in “Plant Health”. 87 inspections will take place in the Member States, 15 in the Candidate Countries and 36 in Third Countries. The 2005 Programme will be updated in the Spring and a detailed plan for the second half of 2005 will be distributed in June.

2. Russian import conditions for animals and products of animal origin (RH) (See Point 2 of the 19 October 2004 SCFCAH and Point 3 of the 17 December 2004 SCFCAH)

The Member States reported to the Commission a number of problems following the final implementation of the single veterinary certificates for imports of animals and animal products from the Community into the Russian Federation. The Commission therefore announced it would ask the Luxembourg Presidency of the European Union whether it is willing to organise a working group with the Russian authorities in order to discuss that particular issue.

3. Veterinary Agreement with New Zealand: Preparation of next Joint Management Committee on 1-2 March 2005 (WMM)

The Commission presented to the Member States the draft agenda of the European Union/New Zealand Veterinary Agreement Joint Management Committee, which will take place on 1-2 March 2005. Among other things will be discussed a possible link between the EU “TRACES” (Trade Control and Expert System) and the NZ “E-Cert” (Electronic Certification) systems.

The Commission further invited the Member States to identify possible additional items to be discussed.

The Commission informed the Member States on a draft decision replacing the Appendix to Annex XIV to the 2003 Act of Accession of Slovakia as regards the dates of compliance with Community legislation of certain establishments in the meat sector. Due to exceptional technical constraints, the date of completion of the upgrading process will be postponed until 31 December 2006 for the Sered’sky’ MP a.s. (Sered) and the Slovryb a.s. (Zilinská) establishments.

The Commission does not need to request the opinion of the Member States to adopt this Decision.

4a. **Problems with imports of fishery products from Indonesia (carbon monoxide treatment, histamine contamination and rapid alert notifications)**

The Commission discussed with Member States the repeated notifications in the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) by the Italian authorities of histamine in tuna originating from Indonesia. The Commission recalled the guarantees given by the Indonesian authorities to reduce contamination, to improve the production chain and to test every batch of tuna sent to the Community. The Commission also informed the Member States that the Indonesian authorities has contested the allegations of contamination in Indonesia, suggesting that they could occur after their arrival within the Community. The Dutch authorities further reported on their inspections on the issue, which showed no traces of histamine in tuna coming from Indonesia.

The Commission requested the Italian and Dutch Delegations to provide the results of their tests in order to verify if the histamine contamination is produced inside the Community or if products arrive at the Border Inspection Posts (BIPs) already contaminated.

The Italian authorities further mentioned RASFF notifications concerning the possible treatment of tuna coming from certain third countries with carbon monoxide, which has the effect of hiding hygiene problems and the possible contamination of the product. The Commission recalled the Member States that treatment with carbon monoxide (so called “clear –or cold- smoke”), is not permitted, as it misleads the consumer.

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision repealing the transitional measure in favour of one establishment in the milk sector in Slovakia, which had been granted in view for that establishment to fully comply with the structural requirements laid down by Community legislation.

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision replacing the Annex to Decision 2004/475/EC as regards the dates of compliance with Community legislation of certain establishments in the meat and milk sectors in Slovakia. Due to exceptional technical constraints, the date of completion of the upgrading process will be postponed until 1 October 2005 for the Meso Kammik (Kammik), Meso Kammik (Domžale) and Arvaj Anton s.p. (Kranj) meat establishments.

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision laying down specific conditions for imports of fishery products from Saudi Arabia. Following an inspection of the Food and Veterinary Office to verify the conditions under which fishery products are produced, stored and dispatched to the Community, the Commission drew up a specimen health certificate and proposed to authorise the National Prawn Company (Al-Laith, Makkah Province) establishment.

Vote: Unanimous vote in favour

The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision adding Saudi Arabia to the list of countries and territories from which importation of fishery products in any form intended for human consumption is authorised (Part I of the Annex to Decision 97/296/CE).

**Vote: Unanimous vote in favour**


The Commission presented to the Member States a draft Decision approving the guarantees presented as regards residue monitoring of some third countries for certain commodities/products. The amendments to the list of Decision 2004/432/EC concerns the addition of Albania (Eggs), Chile (Milk), Kyrgyzstan (Honey), Saudi Arabia (Aquaculture) and Uganda (Honey).

**Vote: Unanimous vote in favour**

10. **Miscellaneous**

- The Commission discussed with the Member States the implication of the Tsunami in Asia on the exports of fish to the EU. The planned mission of the Food and Veterinary Office to India is ongoing, with the agreement of the Indian authorities, while the planed mission to Indonesia has been postponed and the certification of certain establishments in Sri Lanka has been suspended for the time being.

- The British authorities reported on the finding of nitrofuranes in organic poultry from Northern Ireland. Following an thorough investigation, it appears that sludge in a water tank can continue to be infected with nitrofuranes years after the use of the substance has occurred.

**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

Bernard Van Goethem
Acting Director