1. **Opinion on a draft Commission decision authorising the placing on the market of DHA–rich oil from the microalgae *Schizochytrium* sp. as a novel food ingredient under Regulation (EC) No 258/97**

The Committee delivered a favourable opinion (14 Member States in favour, 1 abstention) on the draft decision, after the following modifications had been made:

- in Article 2, the designation DHA-rich oil shall also include the terms “from the microalgae *Schizochytrium* sp”;
- Annex 2 was revised, in particular to provide the information on the content of DHA “per 100g” instead of “per portion”, thus making the column comments redundant.

2. **Opinion on a draft Commission decision authorising the placing on the market of “noni juice” as a novel food ingredient under Regulation (EC) No 258/97**

The Committee delivered a favourable opinion (13 Member States in favour, 1 Member State against, 1 abstention) on the draft decision after that the following amendments had been brought:

- the authorisation is for “noni juice” as a novel food ingredient, and not as a novel food;
- the wording in recital 3 shall closely reflect the last paragraph of the conclusions of the SCF opinion;
- Articles 1 and 2 were simplified in order to reflect that the juice of the fruits of *Morinda citrifolia* is authorised as an ingredient to fruit based drinks only;
- reference to Directive 2001/112/EC on fruit juices in Article 2 was seen as unnecessary;
- Article 3 was seen as unnecessary;
- the specifications laid down in the Annex were seen as redundant.

3. (a) **Exchange of views on a draft Commission decision authorising the placing on the market of “noni juice” as a novel food ingredient under Regulation (EC) No 258/97**

Most delegations were of the opinion that appreciated that the new draft was in line with the SCF opinion and that authorisation should be granted to salatrims as novel food ingredients. However, a number of delegations again expressed
concerns with respect to use by children, and asked that this be addressed by a warning on the label of foods containing salatrims.

It was also suggested to have a definition of salatrims in the annex and to bring the specifications in line with the JECFA specifications.

(b) How the energy value of salatrims should be declared for the purposes of nutritional labelling

The Committee was informed of the Commission's intent to propose a specific energy conversion factor for salatrims to be utilised in nutrition labelling for foods containing salatrims. This recommendation was received favourably by the Committee.

The Commission will therefore propose, in conjunction to the adoption by the Committee of a Commission decision authorising the placing on the market of salatrims as a novel food ingredient, to develop a proposal modifying Article 5 of Directive 90/496/EEC in order to include a specific energy conversion factor for salatrims.

4. Exchange of views on a working document concerning a draft Commission regulation on the labelling of phytosterols and phytosterol esters.

A working document was presented, it was largely welcomed and the urgency of such a Regulation was stressed.

There will be further discussion in the Working Group on Novel Foods on 5 May 2003 with the objective of presenting a draft Regulation to the Committee for an opinion at the next meeting.

5. Information from the Commission on the 2003-2004 Working Programme with respect to: labelling, nutrition and foods for particular nutritional needs.

A representative of the Commission presented the working programme of the “Food Law and Biotechnology” Unit (Sanco-D-4) in the area of “labelling and nutrition”.

He mentioned in particular the forthcoming proposals on “Nutrition and health claims”, “Addition of vitamins and minerals and of certain other substances to foods”, “Nutrition labelling” and “Labelling of alcoholic beverages”, as well as the on-going evaluation of the food labelling legislation.

6. Spain: notification of a national measure requiring the compulsory indication of origin on the labelling of preserved asparagus.

The Chairman indicated that the Commission had received the additional information requested about the justification for the measure and it was now very likely that the Commission would no longer object to the adoption of the proposed measure.

7. Discussion concerning chicken fillets and other meat products containing added water and other ingredients: situation, legislation and controls, future developments.
The recent publication of results of survey carried out in the United Kingdom and Ireland concerning chicken fillets intended for the catering sector showed that problems of mislabelling persists: in particular, the sales name could be misleading to the consumer, the description "Halal" when pork proteins were added, and the incorrect declaration of chicken content.

Moreover the United Kingdom added that problems of mislabelling can also occur with other meat products and preparations which are raw, cooked or cured and resemble a piece, slice, cut or joint of meat. In addition, the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands raised the difficulties in DNA detection and problems of differing results. The Netherlands requested that methodology should be standardised and harmonised. France requested that the issue of chicken fillets be selected as study for the EC co-ordinated control programme.

The Commission pointed out Member States’ obligation to enforce existing regulations and stressed the need to intensify controls on this issue and increase co-operation between Member States.

Finally the Committee welcomed DG SANCO’s consideration of drafting a Commission Directive to strengthen the labelling requirements for certain meat products to indicate the presence of certain ingredients in the name of the food, in particular "added water". Article 6.7 of Directive 2000/13/EC provides a legal basis for such a measure. DG SANCO would convene an expert working group to explore this idea.

8. **Enlargement : State of play of negotiations and monitoring activities**

This item was postponed until the next meeting of the Committee.