efsa
European Food Safety Authority

EFSA in focus FOOD

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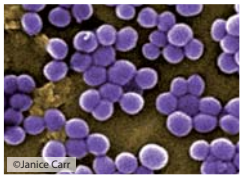
> Key topics

European public health agencies evaluate MRSA in livestock, pets and foods



Currently there is no evidence that eating or handling meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) contaminated food poses an increased health risk for humans, according to a recent scientific report produced by European public health agencies.

Following a request from the European Commission, EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC) concluded that food-producing animals such as pigs, veal calves and broiler chickens often carry without symptoms, a specific strain of MRSA called CC398. However, while food may be contaminated by MRSA there is currently no evidence that eating or handling contaminated food can lead to an increased health risk for humans. The report also noted that people in contact with live animals that carry the CC398 strain of MRSA could be at risk of infection. This specific strain of MRSA has been associated, albeit rarely, with serious skin and soft tissue infections, pneumonia and blood poisoning in humans.

Pets can also be infected with MRSA, where the bacteria first pass from humans to pets, and then back to humans. The document noted the importance of basic hygiene measures, especially hand washing before and after contact with animals, and if possible, avoiding direct contact with nasal secretions, saliva and wounds.

The report concluded that as animal movement and contact between live animals and humans are likely to be important factors in the transmission of MRSA, the most effective control measures will be at farm level.

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> STOP PRESS

EFSA launches project to predict the effect of climate change on aflatoxin B1 in cereals

EFSA has launched a call for proposals to study the potential increase in aflatoxin B1 in cereals in the EU as a result of climate change. Aflatoxin B1 is a mycotoxin produced by moulds which grow on certain cereals including maize, wheat and rice. It is particularly prevalent in hot and humid climates and is carcinogenic.
For more information.

EFSA's scientific experts meet applicants on health claims process

Experts from EFSA's Panel on dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA) met health claims applicants and industry experts in Brussels on 15 June for an exchange of views on the presentation of applications for health claim authorisations.
For more information.

In a parallel review, the European Medicines Agency (EMEA) looked at the risk of colonisation or infection of livestock and pets with MRSA in the context of the authorisation and the use of antimicrobial veterinary medicines. EMEA's Committee for Medicinal Products for Veterinary Use (CVMP) found that MRSA is resistant to virtually all antibiotics from the beta-lactam group, and very often to other antimicrobials. Prudent use of antimicrobials in animals should remain a key measure. The CVMP recommended monitoring of animal consumption of antimicrobials to identify any sources of unnecessary use. The Committee also recommended that medicines of last resort for MRSA treatment in humans should be avoided in animals, so as to ensure their continued efficacy in humans.

MRSA infections are widespread in hospitals in many EU Member States and are a major cause of hospital-acquired infections, which can lead to severe illness and in some cases fatalities. In recent years a link has also been established between MRSA in animals and human MRSA infections. Where MRSA is found amongst food-producing animals, people in contact with these animals, such as farmers, veterinarians and their families, are at risk of acquiring an MRSA infection. To raise awareness of the issue, the ECDC promotes the prudent use of antibiotics in food-producing animals.

For more information

EFSA evaluates use of viral bacteria killers in food

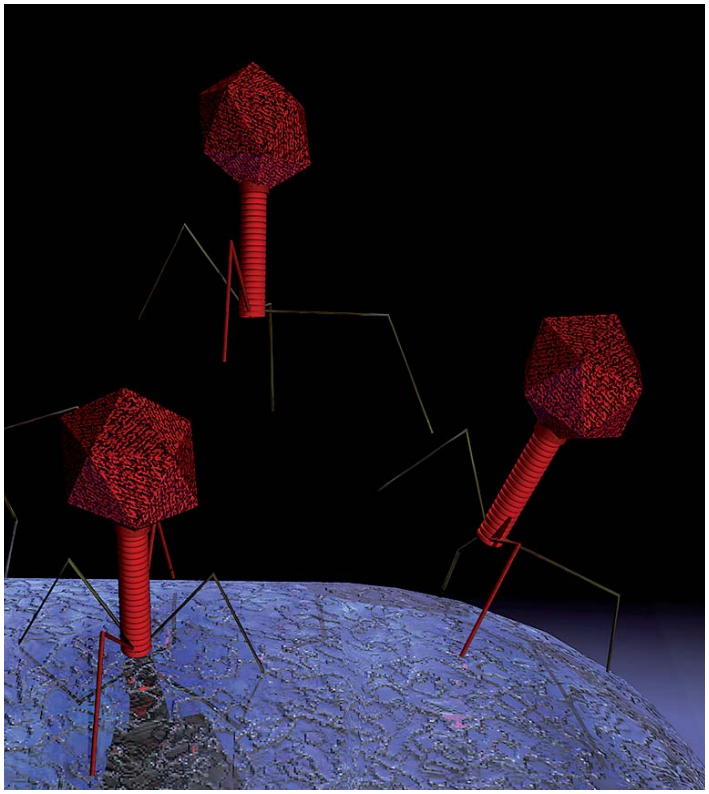
In a recent opinion, EFSA's Panel on Biological Hazards found that under specific conditions bacteriophages, viruses that kill bacteria, may be very effective in eliminating specific pathogens from food. However, existing scientific data did not allow the Panel to conclude whether bacteriophages can protect against bacteria in re-contaminated food.

Bacteriophages occur in nature and have a broad range of habitats. They may be isolated in considerable numbers from meat, milk and derived products.

According to the final opinion, bacteriophages infect specific hosts and are generally limited to some bacterial species or strains. Also some mutant forms of bacteria, which become insensitive to bacteriophages, might exist in populations of the target bacteria. The frequency of these mutants and their consequences are likely to vary according to the specific bacteriophage, the mode of application and the bacteria concerned.

In addition, bacteriophages behave as inert particles in the environment and tend to persist longer than their hosts. However, their long-term antibacterial activity is compromised on dry surfaces. Also, the persistence in food varies with each bacteriophage, and with the conditions of application, including dose, and the physical and chemical factors associated with the food (e.g. pH, moisture levels etc.). For instance, bacteriophages persist longer on the surface of refrigerated meat and dairy products.

This led the Panel to recommend further research for specific combinations of bacteriophages, pathogens and food to assess the persistence of bacteriophages in food and whether they can prevent recontamination from bacterial pathogens.



This opinion arose from a request from the European Commission for advice on the use of bacteriophages in food of animal origin. In particular, it asked about the mode of action of bacteriophages in food of animal origin (carcasses, meat and dairy products), and if these actions persist in the final food.

For more information

Nicotine levels found in wild mushrooms not safe, advises EFSA

The European Commission urgently requested advice following reports of nicotine contamination in samples from the 2008 crop of dried wild mushrooms, mainly from China. EFSA assessed potential exposure and advised that in fresh wild mushrooms, nicotine levels of up to 0.5 mg/kg, the same concentration as found in the contaminated mushrooms, are not safe.

At the time, it was not clear what caused the presence of nicotine in these mushrooms; it could be the use as a pesticide or a number of other factors, such as accidental contamination during the drying process. Eating contaminated wild mushrooms is likely to lead to mild and short-term effects, possibly including increased heart rate, dizziness and headaches.

EFSA established an acute reference dose of 0.0008 mg/kg body weight (b.w.), based on a lowest observed adverse effect level (LOAEL) of 0.0035 mg/kg b.w. for pharmacological effects after the intravenous application of nicotine. To help risk managers establish safe levels protecting consumers, EFSA used existing agreed methodology for setting maximum residue levels (MRLs) for pesticides in food. EFSA proposed 0.036 mg/kg as the concentration of nicotine in fresh wild mushrooms that could be an acceptable MRL. For dried mushrooms a more uniform distribution of the possible contamination could allow up to 0.13 mg/kg of nicotine when recalculated to a fresh weight basis.

As the assessment was affected by a number of uncertainties and limitations on data available (contamination levels and the consumption of wild mushrooms in Europe), EFSA recommended that the proposed MRL be considered as temporary. The monitoring programme recommended by the Commission will also be useful for deriving a more robust basis for exposure assessment and MRL setting.

For more information.

EFSA assesses Cypriot study on resistance to classical scrapie in goats

EFSA's Panel on Biological Hazards has recently assessed a Cypriot study on the genetic resistance to classical scrapie (a type of transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE)) in Cypriot goats. The Panel concluded that the study brings additional proof that the goats harbouring the studied genotypes are potentially less susceptible to classical scrapie. However, EFSA also cautioned that the study findings themselves provided insufficient evidence to support large-scale breeding to eradicate classical scrapie in Cyprus.

It has been scientifically recognised for several years that some variants of the prion protein gene, PRNP, are associated with differences in how TSEs manifest themselves in sheep (incubation period, physiopathology and clinical signs). This has led to EU breeding programmes, based on the selection of sheep known to be genetically resistant to TSE, and eradication measures in TSE-infected flocks, based on a selective elimination of genetically-susceptible sheep.

In goats, it is not fully understood whether there is a similar association. However, results from a pilot project study in Cyprus indicated that there may be similar associations between variants of the PRNP gene and resistance/susceptibility to classical scrapie in goats. The European Commission asked EFSA to assess this study and the results are presented in the recently-adopted opinion.

However, the results only provided limited information. Therefore, the Panel could only conclude that the study provides encouraging information on identifying PRNP polymorphisms that could be used as part of a genetic strategy to control and eradicate TSE agents in goats. The Panel also felt that the results were insufficient to accurately and reliably evaluate whether large-scale genetic breeding to control and eradicate classical scrapie in Cyprus would be effective. The Panel recommended additional research to complement the previous study.

For more information

EFSA promotes alternatives to animal testing

In a recent review of the use of experimental animals in risk assessments, EFSA's Scientific Committee outlines strategies which can reduce the number of animal studies needed and may also lead towards their replacement in some areas.

"*This opinion is a thorough review of the guiding principles on the use of animals for experimental purposes. It summarises possibilities for replacement, reduction and refinement of animal testing within the different areas of EFSA's activities*," said Professor Vittorio Silano, Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee that worked on this opinion. "*We hope it will help EFSA in further developing a proactive approach to animal welfare in its risk assessment activities based on sound scientific principles.*"

Most of EFSA's risk assessments require experimental data. It is currently not possible to obtain all the necessary data and information required to ensure a high level of consumer protection without some animal experiments.

This opinion lists the type of internationally-recognised alternative methods to animal testing which are available for different types of studies used in risk assessment – e.g. acute toxicity, skin irritation and eye irritation testing – and says that these should be used in line with existing EU laws. For areas where alternative methods cannot provide all of the necessary information, such as reproductive and developmental toxicity, the opinion describes integrated

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testing and risk assessment strategies which can help reduce the need for animal experiments.

The opinion also proposes ways to better implement animal welfare practices within EFSA's work. For example, in line with existing EU legislation, applicants submitting dossiers to EFSA should use accepted alternative methods to animal testing whenever possible. Moreover, EFSA should fully reflect on the use of such methods when developing guidelines for applicants. In addition, EFSA, when carrying out risk assessments, should review all existing data before requesting any additional animal studies.

The opinion stresses that animal testing should be conducted in line with guidelines endorsed by the European Commission, EU agencies or other international bodies, such as the OECD. It also recommends a dialogue between EFSA and the Commission on the best ways to address the inclusion of new, validated testing methods in existing guidelines. Furthermore, it stresses the importance of good communication in this area between the different agencies dealing with chemical risk assessments.

This opinion is in line with EFSA's commitment to continue to improve animal welfare when conducting risk assessments. The Scientific Committee also recommended that EFSA should review progress on alternative methods to animal testing in three years.

For more information

EFSA rapidly advises on packaging chemical found in some breakfast cereals

Following an alert about the migration of 4-methylbenzophenone (4-MBP), a chemical substance used in printing inks, from packaging into certain breakfast cereals, the European Commission asked EFSA for urgent scientific advice. They asked the Authority to evaluate if 4-methylbenzophenone would be covered by the Tolerable Daily Intake (TDI) on benzophenone and hydroxybenzophenone, and to evaluate the risk of its presence in cereals. This led EFSA to rapidly issue a statement in March.

"*Although the migration of 4-methylbenzophenone from packaging into foods is not desirable, only in the highest exposure scenario considered – regular consumption of products contaminated at the highest levels reported so far – a risk for some children could not be excluded*," said Riitta Maijala, EFSA's Director of Risk Assessment. "*However, there are important limitations in our knowledge of 4-methylbenzophenone and further data would be needed to be able to fully assess its safety.*"

Based on structural considerations, on experimental results on the structurally related substance benzophenone and taking into account uncertainties, such as the lack of data on 4-methylbenzophenone, and differences between animals and humans, EFSA concluded that 4-methylbenzophenone is likely to be a non-genotoxic carcinogen. The Authority also concluded that there was not enough scientific evidence to apply the previously established group TDI for benzophenone and hydroxybenzophenone to 4-methylbenzophenone.

Based on the limited exposure data available and applying knowledge on the toxicity of a similar substance, benzophenone, EFSA concluded that short term consumption of contaminated breakfast cereals should not pose a risk to most people.

However, if 4-methylbenzophenone contamination continued, more data would be needed in order to carry out a full risk assessment. Following the same request from the European Commission, EFSA re-assessed the TDI on benzophenone and hydroxybenzophenone in May 2009. As a result the consensus was that the benzophenone TDI should increase. EFSA felt this should remove concern over 4-MBP, although it cautioned that more data would be needed if its use were to continue.

For more information

EFSA's review of undesirable substances in animal feed

Most of the 30 risk assessments on undesirable substances in animal feed over the last five years have found no health risks to animals and low risks to human health. However, adverse effects could not be excluded for some animal species. EFSA's Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain recommended reducing the presence of some substances in feed to prevent adverse human health effects.

Undesirable substances are compounds that occur naturally, or result from environmental or other contamination in the feed and food chain. The elimination of undesirable substances in feed is not always possible, but it is important to reduce their presence to avoid endangering animal or human health, or the environment.

The European Commission had asked EFSA to review the possible animal and human health risks due to the presence of undesirable substances in animal feed that are regulated under EU law. The 30 opinions published by EFSA over the last five years covered natural plant products (such as gossypol and theobromine), persistent organic pollutants (such as DDT and hexachlorobenzene), heavy metals (such as arsenic and mercury), fluorine and mycotoxins (such as aflatoxin B1).

In most cases, the Panel identified no risks to animal health resulting from feed intakes at the maximum authorised levels, provided that good animal feeding practices are followed. However, adverse animal health effects could not be excluded for some substances, such as deoxynivalenol in pigs, mercury in cats, gossypol in sheep, and theobromine in dogs and horses.

The risks of adverse human health effects due to the presence of undesirable substances in products of animal origin – such as fresh meat, eggs and milk – were generally found to be low but in some cases the Panel recommended reducing their presence, in particular for persistent organic pollutants such as camphechlor.

The need for further research was identified for several substances, and in particular regarding the extent to which the presence of these substances in feed may lead to the contamination of foods of animal origin.

These assessments allowed the Commission to update the maximum permitted EU legal limits for these substances. For example, the Panel's advice led the Commission to recommend setting out guidance values for the monitoring of mycotoxins in feed. It also led the Commission to lower the maximum levels of, for example, lead in feed, increase fluorine levels to take into account new processing techniques – for example, to improve the nutritional quality – and to introduce maximum levels for contaminants previously not covered, that are intended for animal feed, e.g. cadmium in trace elements. Some plant species have been deleted from the list of undesirable substances in feed, (e.g. apricots and bitter almonds containing cyanogenic glycosides). Changes in the legislation, taking into account the most recent scientific opinions i.e. gossypol, theobromine and mercury, are currently ongoing.

For more information

EFSA assesses uranium in food and water

Since uranium content in mineral water across Europe is governed by different regulations and because of the chemical's toxicity, EFSA was asked to advise what tolerable intake would not pose a health risk to consumers and to assess uranium exposure from food and water.

Uranium is a naturally-occurring radioactive element which can be present in water, air, food and feed in varying concentrations through leaching from natural deposits such as rocks and anthropogenic activities.

In June 2008, EFSA's Panel on Contaminants in the Food Chain issued a specific call to selected countries known for uranium occurrence. Data on uranium concentrations in water and food samples were received from France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. For tap and bottled water mean concentrations varied greatly across countries. Only one country provided data on food, thus these data were less representative.

Several exposure scenarios were explored for adults in Europe. For infants, the exposure scenario included mean and high consumption of infant formula reconstituted with bottled and tap water containing either average or high levels of uranium.

Almost all uranium that is ingested is cleared by the body. About one third of the absorbed uranium is retained in the body, initially in the kidney and liver, then redistributed to the skeleton. The greater the solubility of the uranium compounds, the higher is their toxicity, especially for the kidney. Uranium can also have adverse reproductive and developmental affects, diminish bone growth and cause neurotoxicity.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has established a tolerable daily intake (TDI) for soluble uranium of 0.6 µg/kg body weight (b.w.) per day. The review found that the WHO TDI did not need to be revised as there were no new scientific data. Drawing on individual values from EFSA's Concise European Food Consumption Database, the Panel found the dietary exposure estimates for the general adult population to be well below the TDI. Even for local communities with high uranium concentrations in their water supply, the Panel estimated their exposure to be close to the TDI but still below.

Exposure estimates for infants fed with infant formula reconstituted with water containing high levels of uranium combined with mean or high consumption figures for infant formula revealed that exposure may be up to three times higher than the uranium exposure of adults on the body weight basis. On this ground, the Panel concluded that such exposure in infants should be avoided.

For more information.

Assess food nanotechnology case-by-case, advises EFSA

EFSA has concluded that the use of nanoscience and nanotechnologies in food and feed should be assessed case-by-case. This is one of the conclusions of its scientific opinion adopted by the Scientific Committee in March.

The opinion focused on the use of nanotechnologies, particularly engineered nano materials, in the food and feed chain. It looked at approaches and methodologies available for risk assessment of these very small particles but does not address any specific applications of particular materials. As a result, the Scientific Committee concluded that established international approaches to risk assessment can also be applied to engineered nano materials. The Scientific Committee also found that the current data limitations and lack of validated test methodologies could make risk assessment of specific nano products very difficult and subject to a high degree of uncertainty.

To address this, the Scientific Committee recommends additional research and investigation.

"*EFSA's opinion will help the EC [European Commission] to explore appropriate measures, assess existing legislation and determine the scope of possible further requests for scientific opinions from EFSA in this field*," said Prof Vittorio Silano, chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee that developed the opinion. "*EFSA has already received a small number of such requests and is adopting the case-by-case approach.*"

"*This issue will remain a priority for EFSA's Scientific Committee*," he continued. "*We are establishing a working group of experts to be kept informed of any emerging scientific and other data that will help us deliver the best possible scientific opinions based on the most up-to-date evidence available. EFSA will take a cautious case-by-case approach and looks forward to further data and research becoming available to help inform future scientific opinions.*"

For more information

Ensuring transparency in risk assessments

EFSA's Scientific Committee has adopted recommendations on ensuring transparency in risk assessment to guide the future scientific work of EFSA. They are contained in two opinions, covering the scientific and procedural aspects of risk assessments.

The opinion on the scientific aspects deals with the overarching principles applicable to all of EFSA's scientific outputs. These include general aspects, such as ensuring that risk assessments are understandable and reproducible, and that standardised procedures and terminology are used in the assessments. The opinion also covers documenting the scope and objectives of the work, describing the data and data sources used, encompassing what data are included/excluded, explaining and justifying the assumptions and the assessment process. In addition, other general principles include considering opinions issued by bodies/committees other than EFSA. Moreover, opinion conclusions should address the terms of reference, should reflect the opinion's scope and objectives, and characterise the risk under consideration.

The opinion covering procedural aspects looks at a range of issues. These include: handling requests for scientific opinions; selecting qualified independent scientists for the assessment; involving stakeholders; confidentiality; procedures for adopting opinions; and revising and updating scientific opinions that are already adopted.

These two opinions form part of EFSA's overall framework of supporting good risk assessment practice.

For more information

> EFSA at work

EFSA assesses smoke flavourings: progress to date

By the end of 2009, EFSA will have adopted opinions on 11 different smoke flavourings currently on the market. Of the seven opinions published to date, EFSA has identified concerns over five products.

Some flavourings are added to food to give it a smoked flavour. These smoke flavourings are liquids produced by thermal degradation of wood. They are added to a range of different foods, including those which are not traditionally smoked.

The European Commission asked EFSA to assess the safety of smoke flavourings used or intended for use in the EU. EFSA does this on the basis of applications from companies for market authorisation. These opinions help the Commission establish a list of authorised smoke flavouring products that can be used in food.

So far, EFSA has expressed safety concerns over the uses and use levels of the flavouring products Zesti Smoke Code 10, Unismoke, Scansmoke PB1110, SmokEz C-10 and SmokEz Enviro 23 due to limited toxicological data. The use of Smoke Concentrate 809045 and Scansmoke 7525 was not a safety concern.

These conclusions are based on a further EFSA opinion which gives exposure estimates for 11 smoke flavourings, using several

different calculation methods. EFSA's exposure estimates looked at cumulative exposure to the different flavouring products in different categories of food, based on proposed uses and use levels supplied by the manufacturers.

These estimates indicated that, for the various smoke flavourings, exposure was chiefly through:

> meat and meat products, fish and fish products, composite foods (such as casseroles and meat pies) and processed fruits and vegetables - Zesti Smoke Code 10;

> meat and meat products, as well as soups and sauces - Unismoke;

> ready-to-eat savouries, composite foods (such as casseroles and meat pies), as well as dairy products, processed vegetables, meat and meat products, salts, spices, soups, salads, and protein products - Scansmoke PB1110;

> meat and meat products, soups, sauces, protein products and ready-to-eat avouries - Smoke Concentrate 809045;

> dairy products, meat and meat products, fish and fish products, fats and oils and fat emulsions, processed vegetables, salts, spices, soups, salads, and protein products, ready-to-eat savouries and composite foods, and from non-alcoholic and alcoholic beverages - SmokEz C-10;

> dairy products, meat and meat products, fish and fish products, as well as through salts, spices, soups, salads, and protein products, ready-to-eat savouries and composite foods - SmokEz Enviro 23;

> dairy products, meat and meat products, fish and fish products, ready-to-eat savouries and composite foods and alcoholic beverages - Scansmoke 7525.

For more information

> Meeting Reports

EFSA talks to stakeholders about health claims and botanicals

Parma, *25 February 2009*

EFSA met with organisations representing food supplements manufacturers and suppliers in Europe, on 25 February 2009 in Parma, to discuss its work on nutrition and health claims, and botanicals.

During the technical meeting, EFSA talked to the European Responsible Nutrition Alliance (ERNA), the European Federation of Associations of Health Product Manufacturers (EHPM), and the European Botanical Forum (EBF). They were given an overview of the most recent developments on claims to be assessed by EFSA under the EU legislation on nutrition and health claims, as well as its work on botanicals, such as ginkgo and ginseng, and their derived preparations. Participants also heard about EFSA's work on developing guidance for the safety assessment of botanicals, and the Authority's assessment of the safety of nutritional substances added to food and food supplements.

"*This was a very good meeting,*" said EFSA's Director of Risk Assessment Riitta Maijala. "*It gave us the opportunity to hear feedback from industry associations on our current work in the area of botanicals and botanical preparations.*"

She also invited participants to an EFSA meeting held on 15 June that took stock of EFSA's work on health and nutrition claims.

For more information.

> Working together

Acrylamide monitoring in food across Europe report

EFSA has issued a report on the 2007 levels of acrylamide in food, based on data submitted by various European countries. Compared to 2003-2006, acrylamide levels rose in biscuits, breakfast cereals, french fries and potato products for home cooking, and fell in coffee, bread, potato crisps and other products.

The European Commission recommendation on the monitoring of acrylamide levels in food of 3 May 2007 requires Member States to monitor these levels in certain foodstuffs annually. These data are transmitted directly to EFSA by 1 June each year. A total of 21 European Union Member States and Norway submitted results for acrylamide content in foodstuffs. The food categories used were: french fries, potato crisps, potato products for home cooking, bread, breakfast cereals, biscuits, roasted coffee, jarred baby foods, processed cereal-based baby foods and other products. All told, there were 2715 results reported for foods sampled in 2007.

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EFSA compared the 2007 results with those collected by the European Commission's Institute for Reference Materials and Measurements in 2003 to 2006. There were statistically significant differences between the two sampling occasions. Biscuits, breakfast cereals, french fries and potato products for home cooking showed higher contents of acrylamide in 2007 compared to 2003-2006. Coffee, bread, potato crisps and other products showed lower levels. There was no statistically significant difference in acrylamide content for cereal-based baby foods. Lower acrylamide content in bread and coffee contributed to an approximately 30% fall in acrylamide exposure based on detailed consumption data from two countries.

The food industry has developed voluntary measures, such as the so-called 'toolbox' approach, which provides guidance to help producers and processors identify ways to lower acrylamide in their respective products. It will take some time for all sectors of the industry to implement such changes. After evaluating the data, there seems to be a trend towards slightly lower exposure. However, this trend is not uniform across food groups. Given some further time it will be easier to more clearly gauge the impact of processing changes. However, the average acrylamide levels, in particular for potato crisps and bread, seemed to have decreased over time from 678 to 628 µg/kg and from 274 to 136 µg/kg, respectively.

The latter decrease may in part be due to changes in crispbread processing implemented by industry. A decrease from 427 to 253 µg/kg in the acrylamide content in coffee might have been caused by an initial overestimation, because there are no suitable mitigation measures for coffee so far.

For more information.

Efforts to harmonise food classification

EFSA is building a pan-European repository for food consumption information, and hazardous or beneficial chemical/biological agents to be used for exposure assessment. The functionality of such a central repository relies to a large extent on the availability and implementation of a proper food classification and description system providing a common link to all the diverse datasets involved.

The food classification and description systems in use in the Member States vary from country to country, and within countries, and are characterised by different levels of detail. There is thus a need to harmonise or at least link the disparate information to a common system. During 2008, EFSA financed an Article 36 project to develop and pilot a food classification and description system proposal. This project has recently ended and a proposal has been designed, tested and delivered to EFSA for evaluation and possible further development. General Member State involvement is now crucial to cover the next steps of the process.

A Working Group will shortly be formed with representatives of the Member States to finalise the new tentative food classification and description system that will be used to match food consumption information with information on food composition (ingredients/ nutrients), chemical and microbiological contaminants and residues. Tasks will include an initial analysis of the particular needs for the different areas to be covered, followed by an evaluation of potential solutions and finally the development of an agreed proposal. A system fit for all purposes is with high probability not feasible, but a good compromise with translations between systems that can satisfy the needs of risk assessment is a reasonable target. As part of the process it is anticipated that one or more workshops will be organised to allow for a full exchange of views.

Adopted terminology should allow unequivocal identification of food items and food groups with the required level of detail. Some more novel technical solutions, will be critically evaluated.

Update on EFSA's Scientific Cooperation projects

A key priority for EFSA is mobilising scientific resources throughout Europe. To help drive joint EFSA Member State collaboration, the Authority has established working groups for scientific cooperation (ESCOs) in a number of areas. Participants in ESCO projects include national experts nominated by Member States through the Advisory Forum, members of the Scientific Panels or Scientific Committee, and EFSA's scientific staff .

One of the working groups, covering emerging risks, has built on EFSA's achievements to date to identify and communicate emerging risks. The working group recommended that EFSA complete and validate its overall approach to emerging risks, particularly in relation to data sources and indicators. This included ensuring that EFSA can learn from non-food safety sectors. The Authority should also develop an approach to communicate emerging risks responsibly and establish a fully-functioning network to share data and results with other specialist bodies. In addition, overall awareness of this area should be increased including further research into ways to identify emerging risks.

Another working group looked at fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches in Member States. It recommended in its final report that EFSA and Member States develop so-called 'country profiles' for a better understanding of how risk assessment is organised in different countries. In addition, risk assessment outputs of national organisations should be made publicly available. With this in mind EFSA developed an Information Exchange Platform to share scientific information between EFSA and Member States. Efforts are also needed to implement quality management tools in the risk assessment process. Within specific scientific areas, they also recommended that risk assessment approaches need to be further harmonised.

Meanwhile, an ESCO working group was created to characterise the potential hazards or benefits of isoflavones from soy or red clover in food and food supplements, following a German request for advice. Isoflavones are natural plant substances. Products containing isoflavones – e.g. soya-based products – are growing in popularity in Europe. However, although they are considered to be part of a healthy diet, there are questions surrounding their health impact. The work of this group should help EFSA decide whether a full risk assessment is required.

For more information.

> Events

Inaugural plenary meetings of the renewed Scientific Committee and Panel members

Membership of EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels is re-established every three years. As the mandates of EFSA's Scientific Committee and some Panels were due to expire in summer 2009, EFSA launched a call to renew members. The re-established Scientific Committee and Panels began meeting in summer 2009.

Scientific Committee
Parma, 21-22 July 2009
List of members

Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA)
Parma, 2-3 July 2009
List of members

Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)
Parma, 1-3 July 2009
List of members

Additives and products or substances used in animal feed (FEEDAP)
Parma, 16-17 June 2009
List of members

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)
Parma, 10-11 June 2009
List of members

> Publications

2007 report on foodborne outbreaks in the EU now available

The recently-published 2007 report on foodborne outbreaks in the EU reveals that *Salmonella* was, as in previous years, the most commonly reported cause of outbreaks. Eggs and egg products were the most common source of outbreaks.

Foodborne outbreaks are infections or intoxications in humans caused by the consumption of contaminated food. In total, in 2007, 5,609 foodborne outbreaks were reported by Member States, a slight fall compared to 2006. Of these outbreaks, 36% were verified by laboratory detection of the pathogen or by epidemiological evidence showing a link between human infection and the food source. These verified outbreaks affected almost 40,000 people resulting in 3,291 hospitalisations and 19 deaths.

Salmonella was again the most commonly reported cause of foodborne outbreaks in the EU. *S. enteritidis* was the most common serovar involved and eggs or egg products were the most frequently involved in these outbreaks. Foodborne viruses, mainly calicivirus (including norovirus), were reported as the second most common known cause of outbreaks, most frequently from crustaceans, shellfish, molluscs and buffet meals. *Campylobacter* also remained a common cause of outbreaks.

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The majority of foodborne outbreaks in 2007 were outbreaks affecting more than one household. The contaminated foodstuffs were most commonly consumed in homes or in restaurants, cafés, hotels or other caterers. Other places where outbreaks occurred included schools, canteens, and hospitals or medical care facilities.

Member States varied considerably in the numbers and proportions of verified outbreaks reported. However, this may be due to differences in the sensitivity and efficiency of the national systems for investigating and reporting outbreaks.

The report was based on information submitted by 22 Member States, as well as Norway and Switzerland. The report was jointly published by EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

For more information.

Acrylamide carcinogenicity, new scientific colloquium report available

The report from EFSA's 11th scientific colloquium, which took place in Tabiano, Italy, on 22-23 May 2008, has been published. It covers acrylamide carcinogenicity and new evidence in relation to dietary exposure to acrylamide.

The colloquium was organised to stimulate an open exchange of views and expertise on new information on acrylamide that has become available since the Joint FAO/WHO expert committee on food additives (JECFA) carried out a risk assessment of acrylamide in 2005, classifying acrylamide as a potentially harmful substance in food.

The debate focused on the current state and future challenges regarding the potential toxicity and cancer risk associated with dietary exposure to acrylamide. Acrylamide is a contaminant that can be formed during the preparation of food at high temperatures, particularly in starchy foods such as crisps, french fries and bread.

The report contains the presentations given at the meeting, reports from discussion groups, as well as an overall summary and recommendations.

For more information.

Controlling *Campylobacter* in the food chain: scientific colloquium report available

The latest in EFSA's series of scientific colloquium reports has been published. It assesses the health benefits of controlling *Campylobacter* in the food chain.

The colloquium was organised to discuss openly the current issues and future challenges concerning the risk assessment of *Campylobacter* in the EU food chain. In particular, the debate focused on the best approaches for data collection and quantitative risk assessment to determine the human health impact, fluoroquinolone resistance, and what are the most effective control measures.

Even though *Campylobacter* is recognised as the leading cause of acute bacterial enteritis in Europe, the true incidence of campylobacteriosis is considerably higher than reported, and underestimation is likely to vary considerably between countries. Therefore, at the meeting, colloquia delegates recommended that public health surveillance systems be further strengthened. Also experts should increase their collaboration to improve and standardise data collection so as to provide baseline information on campylobacteriosis, and to monitor the effectiveness of interventions. In addition, given contaminated poultry meat is a major source of human exposure, relevant quantitative risk assessment models need to be further developed to support EU-wide risk management strategies.

Concerning fluoroquinolone resistance, delegates recommended monitoring the use of antimicrobials overall in animals, in particular, when planning any intervention. However, experts noted that it is unlikely that there will be a single effective measure applicable across all Member States. Since current interventions show limited effectiveness or are difficult to sustain. Therefore, among the recommendations made were running well-designed field trials, informed by quantitative risk assessments, to test the most promising strategies. Novel control strategies are also required but will need advanced planning to evaluate their efficacy and safety.

The report contains the presentations given at EFSA's 12th scientific colloquium, which took place in Rome, Italy, on 4 December 2008. It also contains reports from discussion groups, as well as an overall summary and full recommendations.

For more information

Strategic Plan 2009-2013 published as a glossy report

EFSA has published a print version of its Strategic Plan for 2009-2013. The plan, adopted by the Management Board in December 2008, sets out EFSA's medium to long-term strategic direction.

Six key, high-level objectives have been identified in the Plan to help the Authority set priorities over the coming five years as its work continues to evolve driven by regulatory, environmental, scientific, technological and other global factors.

For the full document.

Scientific cooperation expands and output doubles, shows EFSA's 2008 Annual Report

EFSA's recently-published 2008 Annual Report, underlines how the Authority has matured and continued to grow. The report shows that among EFSA's achievements in 2008: the Authority doubled its scientific output; significantly expanded scientific cooperation with Member States, and beyond; and launched its 5-year Strategic Plan.

In 2008, EFSA finalised 489 scientific outputs. These included scientific opinions, reports, guidance documents and statements. Two new scientific panels were also created.

Scientific cooperation was further strengthened. Networks grew to include 1,200 experts, 30 national food safety bodies and almost 400 scientific organisations. EFSA Focal Points were established in all 27 EU Member States, and cooperation agreements were signed with the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, and the European Commission's Joint Research Centre.

In its Strategic Plan for 2009-2013 EFSA has mapped out its future direction, priorities and organisation to best prepare for

the challenges ahead in the medium- and long-term, such as emerging risks, global warming and globalisation. For the first time, the Annual Report will also be made available in all EU official languages in the autumn.

For more information.

> Calls

Call for data for further advice on animal cloning

EFSA published a call for new scientific evidence following the European Commission's request for further advice on the implications on animal cloning. This call follows EFSA's previous opinion on animal cloning, published in July 2008.

Specifically EFSA sought information which has become available since January 2008. Such data include new scientific publications, as well as scientific information which was not as yet published.

EFSA was particularly interested in the health and welfare of animal clones throughout their life, and information on the causes of pathologies and mortality in clones. EFSA also sought information on the cloning of sheep, goats and chicken, especially concerning the:

- Health and welfare of the surrogate mother and clone;
- Extent epigenetic dysregulation occurring in clones is transmitted to their offspring;
- Genetic make-up of animal clones;
- Comparative physiology of clones and conventional animals, including their reproductive capacity;
- Safety of consuming animal clones and their products (meat, milk products, eggs).

The call closed on 30 April 2009.

For more information.

Article 36 calls

Article 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation allows the Authority to financially support projects and activities that contribute to EFSA's mission. This financial support is exclusively given to a list of competent organisations capable of assisting EFSA in its work. The list was drawn up on the basis of nominations made by Member States in an EFSA Management Board decision.

Article 36 calls awarded

CFP/EFSA/FEEDAP/2009/01

Review of mycotoxin detoxifying agents used as feed additives: mode of action, efficacy and feed/food safety

Agence Française de la Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments (AFSSA), (FR)

CFP/EFSA/CONTAM/2008/02

Survey on use of veterinary medicinal products in third countries

Central Science Laboratory, (UK)

For all calls awarded.

> Consultations

Public consultation on EFSA's guidance on submitting food enzymes dossiers for evaluation

EFSA launched a public consultation on its draft guidance document on how to prepare dossiers for the Authority to evaluate the safety of food enzymes.

Under EU law, EFSA must evaluate the safety of food enzymes before they can be added to an EU list of approved enzymes. However, many were already on the market before the new EU regulation on a common authorisation procedure entered into force on 20 January 2009. To smooth the transition to this EU-wide list of approved enzymes, the European Commission asked EFSA to draw up guidelines to assist organisations in preparing and submitting applications for the Authority's safety evaluations.

EFSA has since prepared a guidance document laying out the format of an application, listing the administrative and technical data required, and the range of toxicological tests generally required for the safety assessment of a food enzyme.

In line with EFSA's policy on openness and transparency the Authority launched a public consultation on this draft guidance document to receive comments from the scientific community and stakeholders.

The consultation closed on 8 June 2009.

For more information.

Public consultation on guidelines for active or intelligent food packaging

EFSA held a public consultation on its draft guidelines on active or intelligent substances used in food contact materials. After adoption, the final guidelines will then be used by applicants in submitting dossiers for the Authority to evaluate the safety of these substances.

According to the relevant European regulation, materials and articles in contact with food shall only be authorised at a community level if it is demonstrated that they do not present risks to human health. Following a draft European Commission regulation on active or intelligent food packaging materials, an EU list of substances which can be used in the manufacture of active or intelligent food packaging materials will be drawn up. This list will be compiled after EFSA has conducted a risk assessment and issued its opinion on each substance's safety.

The consultation closed on 22 April.

For more information.

Mandates received per unit: February-May 2009

Information on all other on-going requests is available in EFSA's **register of questions**.

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Hazard characterization of use of dietary isoflavones and isolated isoflavones from soy or red clover in food and food supplements.

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **06-Mar-2009** Deadline: **31-Dec-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00457**

Review of the efficacy under field conditions of notified biocides, compared to sodium hydroxide and sodium carbonate

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **27-Mar-09** Deadline: **15-Apr-08**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00492**

Food Additives & Nutrient Sources (ANS)

To perform a scientific risk assessment on food additive: allyl isothiocyanate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **06-Feb-09** Deadline: **30-Jun-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00377**

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Risk of transmission of TSEs via semen and embryos in small ruminants (sheep and goats)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **29-May-09** Deadline: **1-Nov-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00620**

Parasites in fishery products

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **30-Mar-09** Deadline: **31-Dec-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00516**

Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings (CEF)

3-[(2-methyl-3-furyl)thio]butanal

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00584**

(2E)-2-nomenyl acetate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00583**

(E,Z)-2,6-nonadienyl acetate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00582**

4-Amino-5,6-dimethylthieno[2,3-d]pyrimidin-2(1H)-one

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00581**

Digeranylether

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00580**

Latest mandates received

Cyclopropanecarboxylic acid (2-isoprophyl-5-methyl-cyclohexyl)-amide

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00579**

4-(2,2,3-trimethylcyclopentyl)butanoic acid

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00578**

2-Pentyl-4-propyl-1,3-oxathiane

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00577**

2,5 Dihydroxy-1,4-Dithiane

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00576**

Nibovan

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00575**

Dihydrogalangal acetate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00574**

Guaiacol Isobutyrate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00573**

Guaiacol Butyrate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00572**

Rebaudioside A

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00571**

9-decen-2-one

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00570**

Guaiacol propionate

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00569**

Trilobatin

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00567**

6-Methylheptanal

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **14-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00566**

4-hydroxy-2,5-dimethylfuran-3(2H)-one (FL 13.010)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **11-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00568**

Alpha bisabobol

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **04-May-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00532**

2-methylquinoxaline (FL 14.139)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **08-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00520**

Dimethylquinoxaline (FL 14.108)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **08-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00519**

5-methylquinoxaline (FL 14.028)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **08-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Sep-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00518**

Mixture of 5-chloro-2-methyl-2H-isothiazol-3-one (EINECS 247-500-7) and 2-methyl-2H-isothiazol-3-one (EINECS 220-239-6)

Requestor: **Germany**
Reception date: **08-Apr-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00515**

39280-N,N-Bis(2-hydroxyethyl)lauramide

Requestor: **Germany**
Reception date: **04-Mar-09** Deadline: **04-Sep-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00591**

Reassessment the TDI on benzophenone and hydroxybenzophenone

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **19-Feb-09** Deadline: **31-May-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00411**

Risk of the presence of 4-methylbenzophenone in food

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **19-Feb-09** Deadline: **03-Mar-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00410**

Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

Request for an urgent scientific opinion on the risks for public health due to the presence of nicotine in wild mushrooms

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **27-Apr-09** Deadline: **07-May-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00528**

Latest mandates received

Data Collection & Exposure (DATEX)

Current default assumptions used by EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels in the absence of actual measured data

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **02-Feb-09** Deadline: **31-May-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00307**

Food Consumption and Exposure

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **02-Feb-09** Deadline: **28-Feb-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00306**

Nutrition (NDA)

Under the EU's Regulation on the use of nutrition and health claims for foods (Reg.(EC) No 1924/2006), EFSA has received requests to evaluate:

14 Article 14 applications **For more information**
3 Article 13.5 applications **For more information**
0 Article 13 applications **For more information**

Essential fatty acids

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **24-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Jun-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00548**

Request on health claims related to plant sterols/stanols

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **20-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Jun-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00530**

Cetyl Myristoleate as food ingredient

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **20-Apr-09** Deadline: **31-Dec-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00529**

Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum (SC&AF)

European Commission request for further advice on the implications of animal cloning (SCNT)

Requestor: **European Commission**
Reception date: **06-Mar-09** Deadline: **30-Jun-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00449**

Zoonoses (Data Collection)

Community Summary Report on foodborne outbreaks in 2007 in the EU

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Apr-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00514**

Availability of molecular typing methods of foodborne pathogens in the EU Member States

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **30-Apr-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00513**

Issuing guidance on harmonised survey methods for foodborne pathogens in foods in the EU

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **31-Jul-11**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00512**

Rabies and Q fever in the EU - harmonisation of monitoring and reporting

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **31-Jul-11**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00511**

Certain zoonotic parasites in the EU - harmonisation of monitoring and reporting

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **31-Dec-10**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00510**

Revision of the Zoonoses reporting web-application and running the Zoonoses support help-desk

Requestor: **EFSA**
Reception date: **03-Apr-09** Deadline: **31-Jul-09**
Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00509**

> Opinions and other documents

List of opinions and other documents published per unit: February-May 2009

Disclaimer: This is not the full list of all EFSA opinions but only those considered relevant to this newsletter. **For full list.**

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Request for a scientific opinion on cadmium in food - Toxicokinetic modelling - meta-analysis of dose-effect relationships and the related benchmark dose, heavy metals / cadmium

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00472** Issued: **20-Mar-09**

Defining output-based standards to achieve and maintain *tuberculosis* freedom in farmed deer, with reference to member states of the European Union

Aricle in Elsevier Preventive Veterinary Medicine
Authors : Simon J. More a,*, Angus R. Cameron b, Matthias Greiner c, Richard S. Clifton-Hadley d, Sandra Correia Rodeia e, Douwe Bakker f, Mo D. Salman g, J. Michael Sharp h, Fabrizio De Massis e, Alicia Aranaz i, M. Beatrice Boniotti j, Alessandra Gaffuri k, Per Have e, Didier Verloo e, Michael Woodford l, Martin Wierupm
Received **15-Jul-08** Accepted **26-Mar-09**

Food additives & nutrient sources (ANS)

Inability to assess the safety of potassium amino acid chelate and iron amino acid chelate as sources of potassium and iron added for nutritional purposes to food supplements based on the supporting dossiers

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-221, EFSA-Q-2006-222, EFSA-Q-2007-074** Adopted: **14-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902554518.htm

Calcium acetate, calcium pyruvate, calcium succinate, magnesium pyruvate magnesium succinate and potassium malate added for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-131, EFSA-Q-2005-136, EFSA-Q-2005-137, EFSA-Q-2005-141, EFSA-Q-2006-230, EFSA-Q-2008-025**
Adopted: **13-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902555785.htm

Inability to assess the safety of silicon-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of silicon in food supplements and the bioavailability of silicon from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-202** Adopted: **29-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902522603.htm

Inability to assess the safety of iodine-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of iodine in food supplements and the bioavailability of iodine from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-201** Adopted: **29-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902522272.htm

Assessment of the safety of cobalt(II) chloride hexahydrate added for nutritional purposes as a source of cobalt in food supplements and the bioavailability of cobalt from this source

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-276** Adopted: **28-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902522050.htm

Se-methyl-L-selenocysteine added as a source of selenium for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-170, EFSA-Q-2006-306, EFSA-Q-2006-308** Adopted: **28-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902546110.htm

Review of the safety of aspartame in view of the second study by the European Ramazzini Foundation

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00474** Adopted: **19-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902454309.htm

Selenious acid as a source of selenium added for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-278** Adopted: **19-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902434089.htm

Calcium ascorbate, magnesium ascorbate and zinc ascorbate added for nutritional purposes in food supplements

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2006-229, EFSA-Q-2005-087, EFSA-Q-2005-104** Adopted: **24-Feb-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902404000.htm

Safety of high viscosity white mineral oils used as food additives

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-003** Adopted: **20 Mar 09**

Calcium phosphinate as a source of calcium added for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-279** Adopted: **06 Apr 09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902458999.htm

Inability to assess the safety of boron-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of boron in food supplements and the bioavailability of boron from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-187** Adopted: **29 Apr 09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902532413.htm

Inability to assess the safety of calcium amino acid chelate, copper amino acid chelate, magnesium amino acid chelate, manganese amino acid chelate and zinc amino acid chelate

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2006-297, EFSA-Q-2006-298, EFSA-Q-2006-299, EFSA-Q-2006-300 and EFSA-Q-2006-301**
Adopted: **30 April 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902522165.htm

Inability to assess the safety of iron glycerophosphate added for nutritional purposes as a source of iron in food supplements and the bioavailability of iron from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-252** Adopted: **30 April 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902522424.htm

L-selenomethionine as a source of selenium added for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-103, EFSA-Q-2006-195, EFSA-Q-2006-196, EFSA-Q-2006-304**
Adopted: **14 May 2009**

Inability to assess the safety of chromium-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of chromium in food supplements and the bioavailability of chromium from this source, based on the supporting dossiers

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-097, EFSA-Q-2005-120, EFSA-Q-2005-205, EFSA-Q-2006-211, EFSA-Q-2006-212, EFSA-Q-2006-213**
Adopted: **13 May 2009**

Assessment of the safety of vanadium-enriched yeasts added for nutritional purposes as a source of vanadium in food supplements and the bioavailability of vanadium from vanadium-enriched yeasts

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-171, EFSA-Q-2005-190** Adopted: **13 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902555678.htm

Inability to assess the safety of strontium-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of strontium in food supplements and the bioavailability of strontium from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-193** Adopted: **13 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902554454.htm

Inability to assess the safety of lithium-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of lithium in food supplements and the bioavailability of lithium from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-192** Adopted: **13 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902554486.htm

Inability to assess the safety of molybdenum-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of molybdenum in food supplements and the bioavailability of molybdenum from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-203** Adopted: **14 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902554424.htm

Copper(II) oxide as a source of copper added for nutritional purposes to food supplements

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-156, EFSA-Q-2006-219, EFSA-Q-2006-286, EFSA-Q-2006-287**
Adopted: **14 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902554619.htm

Inability to assess the safety of folic acid-enriched yeast added for nutritional purposes as a source of folic acid to food supplements and the bioavailability of folic acid from this source, based on the supporting dossier

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-197** Adopted: **14 May 2009**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902566897.htm

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Updated risk for human and animal health related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in some Member States (EU15, Slovenia and Cyprus)

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2008-753, EFSA-Q-2008-712** Adopted: **22-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902502788.htm

The use and mode of action of bacteriophages in food production

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-400** Adopted: **22-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902525399.htm

Mandate for a consolidated opinion on use of antibiotic resistant marker genes (ARM) used as marker genes in genetically modified plants

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-706** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Quantitative estimation of setting a new target for the reduction of *Salmonella* in breeding hens of *Gallus gallus*

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-291** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902440821.htm

Genetic TSE resistance in goats

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-774** Adopted: **05-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902400699.htm

Assessment of the public health significance of meticillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in animals and foods

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-300** Adopted: **05-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902408708.htm

Food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings (CEF)

Secondary alicyclic saturated and unsaturated alcohols, ketones and esters containing secondary alicyclic alcohols from chemical group 8 and 30, and an ester of a phenol carboxylic acid from chemical group 25

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00562** Adopted: **14-May-09**

Aliphatic acyclic diols, triols, and related substances evaluated by JECFA

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00557** Adopted: **14-May-09**

Reassessment the TDI on benzophenone and hydroxybenzophenone

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00411** Adopted: **14-May-09**

Iron containing organic substances from chemical group 30

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-046** Adopted: **14-May-09**

SmokeEz Enviro 23/CharSol Select 23

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-264** Adopted: **14-May-09**

SmokeEz C-10/CharSol Sol C-10

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-263** Adopted: **14-May-09**

Scansmoke SEF 7525

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-262** Adopted: **14-May-09**

Safety for the consumer of SAN-PEL as an antimicrobial substance applied on food of animal origin

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-011** Adopted: **21-Apr-09**

Consideration of aliphatic acyclic acetals evaluated by JECFA

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00484** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Consideration of benzyl derivatives evaluated by JECFA (57th meeting) structurally related to benzyl alcohols, benzaldehydes, a related acetal, benzoic acids and related esters evaluated by EFSA (2009)

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00483** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902524149.htm

Consideration of phenethyl alcohol, aldehyde, acid and related acetals and esters evaluated by JECFA (59th meeting)

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00482** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Thiazoles, thiophene, thiazoline and thienyl derivatives from chemical group 29. Miscellaneous substances from chemical group 30

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00481** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Aromatic ketones from chemical group 21

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00480** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Aliphatic and alicyclic mono-, di-, tri-, and polysulphides with or without additional oxygenated functional groups from chemical groups 20 and 30

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00479** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Saturated and unsaturated aliphatic secondary alcohols, ketones and esters of secondary alcohols and saturated linear or branched-chain carboxylic acids from chemical group 5

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00478** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

23th list of substances for food contact materials

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2003-199, EFSA-Q-2007-023, EFSA-Q-2008-678** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902432546.htm

Consideration of phenyl-substituted aliphatic tertairy alcohols and related aldehydes and esters evaluated by JECFA (63rd and 68th meetings)

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-309** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Thujyl alcohol

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-047** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Cinnamyl alcohol and related flavouring agents evaluated by JECFA

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-032T** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**

Safety of smoke flavour primary product - Scansmoke PB 1110

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-261** Adopted: **26-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902460876.htm

Risk of the presence of 4-methylbenzophenone in food

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00410** Adopted: **04-Mar-09**

81445-Polyvinyl isobutyl ether

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-015** Adopted: **25-Feb-09**

Dietary exposure assessment methods for smoke flavouring primary products

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-402** Adopted: **24-Feb-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902429516.htm

Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

Pectenotoxins in shellfish

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-065C** Adopted: **27-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902599809.htm

Review of the criteria for acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00236** Adopted: **26-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902553518.htm

Request for an urgent scientific opinion on the risks for public health due to the presence of nicotine in wild mushrooms

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00528** Adopted: **07-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902603897.htm

Influence of processing on the levels of lipophilic marine biotoxins in bivalve molluscs

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00203** Adopted: **25-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902424332.htm

Uranium in foodstuffs, in particular in mineral water

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-135** Adopted: **25-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902498761.htm

Marine biotoxins in shellfish – Saxitoxin group

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2006-065E** Adopted: **25-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902452476.htm

Nitrites as undesirable substance in animal feed

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-287** Adopted: **25-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902444119.htm

Data Collection Exposure (DATEX)

Results on the monitoring of acrylamide levels in food

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-343** Adopted: **30-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902585656.htm

Nutrition (NDA)

Bimuno (BGOS) Prebiotic and reduction of bad bacteria that can cause travellers' diarrhoea

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00232** Adopted: **15-May-09**

Bimuno (BGOS) Prebiotic, helps to maintain a healthy gastro-intestinal function

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00231** Adopted: **15-May-09**

Bimuno (BGOS) Prebiotic, supporting the immune system

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00230** Adopted: **15-May-09**

Water-soluble tomato concentrate (WSTC I and II) and platelet aggregation

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00229** Adopted: **15-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902550167.htm

NPU Tabs contain Humulus Lupulus, Female breast enhancement process

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-784** Adopted: **15-May-09**

Opinion on the safety of "Glucosamine Hydrochloride from *Aspergillus niger*" as food ingredient

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-306** Adopted: **15-May-09**

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to *Lactobacillus plantarum* 299v (DSM 9843) and improve iron absorption

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-785** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902434649.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to DHA and support of the cognitive development of the unborn child and breastfed infant

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-773** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902443172.htm

Review of labelling reference values for selected nutritional elements

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-772** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902511922.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to Enfamil® Premium and brain development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-691** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902399188.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to Lipil® and brain development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-690** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902399236.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to Enfamil® Premium and visual development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-689** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902399200.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to Lipil® and visual development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-688** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902399257.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to DHA and support of the visual development of the unborn child and breastfed infant

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-675** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902443188.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to ALA and contribution to brain development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-666** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902431278.htm

Scientific substantiation of a health claim related to docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) and arachidonic acid (ARA) and brain development

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-212** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902399151.htm

Opinion on the safety of 'Alfalfa protein concentrate' as food

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-031** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902431684.htm

Opinion on the safety of 'Chia seeds (*Salvia hispanica L.*) and ground whole Chia seeds' as a food ingredient

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-008** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902431817.htm

Opinion on the safety of Tahitian Noni® '*Morinda citrifolia* (noni) fruit puree and concentrate' as a novel food ingredient

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-181** Adopted: **13-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902431657.htm

Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum (SC&AF)

ESCO Working Group on "Botanicals and Botanical Preparations"

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2008-388a, EFSA-Q-2008-388b** Adopted: **30-Apr-09**

Animal welfare - implementation of a proactive policy on the welfare of animals in the context of EFSA's mission and tasks as stated in Regulation 178/2002

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-231** Adopted: **08-Apr-09**

Transparency in risk assessment, development of comprehensive guidance

Question numbers: **EFSA-Q-2005-00298, EFSA-Q-2005-00299, EFSA-Q-2005-050Ba, EFSA-Q-2005-050Bb** Adopted: **07-Apr-09**

The potential risks arising from nanoscience and nanotechnologies on food and feed safety

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-124b** Adopted: **10-Feb-09**

Risks arising from nanoscience and nanotechnologies on food and feed safety and the environment

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-124a** Adopted: **10-Feb-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902361968.htm

Risks arising from nanoscience and nanotechnologies on food and feed safety and the environment

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2007-00228** Adopted: **10-Feb-09**

Use of benchmark dose approach in risk assessment

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2005-232** Adopted: **26-May-09**

Zoonoses (Data Collection)

Community Summary Report on foodborne outbreaks in 2007 in the EU

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00514** Adopted: **30-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902515341.htm

Report on the availability of molecular typing methods for *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, verotoxigenic *Escherichia coli*, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Staphylococcus aureus* isolates from food, animals and feedingstuffs in European Union Member States (and in some other reporting countries)

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00513** Adopted: **06-Apr-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902507851.htm

Reporting manual for the zoonoses web based reporting application for year 2009

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00476** Adopted: **31-Mar-09**

Guidance Document of the Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection - Manual for reporting foodborne outbreaks Outbreaks in the framework of Directive 2003/99/EC

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00475** Adopted: **31-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902438533.htm

Report on Statistical analysis of temporal and spatial trends of zoonotic agents in animals and food Part I: Critical review of the statistical analysis carried out on the Community Summary Report 2006 data

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-264** Adopted: **31-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902520585.htm

Manual for Reporting on Zoonoses, Zoonotic Agents and Antimicrobial Resistance in the framework of Directive 2003/99/EC and of some other pathogenic microbiological agents for information derived from the reporting year 2008

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-671** Adopted: **18-Mar-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902432152.htm

Report on the proposed technical specifications for a survey on *Listeria monocytogenes* in selected categories of ready-to-eat food at retail in the EU

Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-415** Adopted: **22-May-09**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902556892.htm

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