



EFSA in focus *FOOD*

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Contents

Key topics

> What's on the menu in Europe?	1
> EFSA and ECDC issue 2008 report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in the EU	2
> EFSA publishes second series of opinions on 'general function' health claims	3
> EFSA updates safety advice on six food colours	3
> Previous cargoes of food transport ships evaluated by EFSA	4
> EFSA completes first safety assessments of smoke flavourings	5
> EFSA publishes results of survey on <i>Salmonella</i> in breeding pigs in the EU	5
> EFSA assesses arsenic in food	6
> EFSA reports aim to harmonise monitoring of two food-borne zoonoses	6
> EFSA confirms chicken meat major source of human cases of campylobacteriosis	7

EFSA at work

> EFSA issues guidance on the collection of national food consumption data	7
> Introducing the EFSA Journal: EFSA science at your fingertips	8

Meeting report

> EFSA issues ESCO report on risks and benefits of folic acid	8
> EFSA workshop on botanicals	8

Working together

> Better surveillance needed to fight spread of antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic infections	9
> EFSA launches a knowledge database on 3-MCPD esters	9
> EFSA launches cooperation project on non-plastic food contact materials	10
> World Health Organisation delegation visits EFSA	10
> International Food Chemicals Safety Liaison Group meets at EFSA	10

Calls

> Calls for data on permitted food additives	11
> Request for data on brominated flame retardants levels in foodstuffs	11

Article 36

	12
--	----

Consultations

> EFSA launches public consultation on guidance document on food flavourings	13
> EFSA consults on guidance on risk-benefit assessment of food	13
> EFSA consults on the evaluation of safety and effectiveness of substances used for removal of microbial surface contamination	13

Latest mandates received

	14
--	----

Opinions and other documents

	16
--	----

> Key topics

What's on the menu in Europe?

EFSA and national food safety agencies back plans for pan-European food consumption survey.



Are intakes of food additives safe for all population groups? Are fat intake levels going down in the EU? Are consumers exposed through their diet to high levels of heavy metals such as cadmium? Who is most at risk of deficiencies in nutrients such as iron or folic acid? Which foods contribute most to *Salmonella* infections in humans?

These are some of the many questions that risk assessors at EFSA and in Member States address in their work every day. Access to reliable and comparable information and data on food consumption is critical in providing answers both to possible food safety and nutritional concerns.

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> STOP PRESS

EFSA to launch new calls for Panel experts and external reviewers

EFSA will soon launch three separate calls to further maintain excellence in its scientific outputs. There will be calls to: 1) renew members of its food additives & nutrient sources and its food contact materials, enzymes & flavourings Panels (ANS/CEF starting a new 3 year mandate in 2011); 2) Extend the reserve list of members of EFSA's Scientific Committee and Panels and 3) extend the reserve list of external scientific experts to review the quality of its scientific outputs. More information will be available on EFSA's website soon.

EFSA publishes European overview of dioxin levels in food and feed

EFSA has published an analysis of the levels of dioxins and related substances in food and animal feed. The report, which was prepared by EFSA's Data Collection and Exposure unit, is based on over 7,000 samples collected by 21 European countries between 1999 and 2008.

[For more information.](#)

When a new hazard is found in the food chain – for instance the recent cases of melamine found in various foods or dioxin contamination of pork – scientists must quickly assess who is exposed, through which foods and at what levels. This in order to provide a rapid and reliable risk assessment and to help risk managers take appropriate action to protect consumers.

In the area of nutrition, the analysis of dietary intake data is essential to help set science-based public health targets, to assess how dietary intakes compare with recommended intake levels and to monitor progress over time.

Today, scientists in Member States and at EFSA rely on food consumption data collected at national level. Progress has been made in recent years, spearheaded by EFSA and the Advisory Forum, to bring together such data in order to allow more efficient and accurate exposure assessment at EU level.

Nevertheless, important differences in food consumption data collection remain and hamper the effective use of such data for risk assessment at EU level.

On 12 February, Members of EFSA's Advisory Forum, bringing together national food safety agencies from the 27 EU Member States, confirmed their strong support for the establishment of a pan-European food consumption survey (EU Menu). This critical tool and building block for risk assessment will allow the collection of detailed and harmonised food consumption data at the level of individuals, across the EU. First discussed at the Advisory Forum meeting in Athens on 25 November 2009, members endorsed this project as a priority for scientific cooperation between Member States and EFSA. ■

[For more information.](#)

EFSA and ECDC issue 2008 report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in the EU

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their Annual Report on Zoonoses and Food-borne outbreaks for 2008, which gives an overview of zoonotic infections shared in nature by humans and animals, and disease outbreaks caused by consuming contaminated food. The report shows that the number of human cases of the three most reported zoonotic infections was lower in 2008 than in 2007.

Campylobacteriosis remained the most frequently reported zoonotic infection in humans across the European Union, with 190,566 cases notified in 2008 (down from 200,507 in 2007). In foodstuffs, *Campylobacter*, which can cause diarrhoea and fever, was mostly found in raw poultry meat. In live animals, *Campylobacter* was found in poultry, pigs and cattle.

Salmonella, the second most reported zoonotic infection in humans, decreased significantly for the fifth consecutive year, with 131,468 cases in 2008 compared to 151,998 in 2007, representing a 13.5% decrease. It remained however the most frequent cause of food borne outbreaks. *Salmonella* was found most frequently in raw chicken, turkey and pig meat. In animal populations, an important decline of the *Salmonella* type Enteritidis – the type most frequently affecting humans – was observed in laying hen flocks.

2008 was the first year in which EU Member States implemented a new programme put in place by the EU Commission to reduce the prevalence of *Salmonella* in laying hens; 20 Member States have already met their reduction target for that year. This could be the reason for a decrease of *Salmonella* Enteritidis infections in humans, since eggs are known to be the most important source for these infections, the report said.

"It is worth noting that the number of Salmonella cases is declining both in animals and humans. The findings in the report support the Commission and Member States in reducing the prevalence of zoonoses in the EU," said Hubert Deluyker, EFSA's Director of Scientific Cooperation and Assistance.

Andrea Ammon, ECDC's Head of Surveillance Unit, added: *"It is encouraging to note the overall decline for most of the zoonotic diseases covered by the report. However, there is no room for*



complacency and the report serves to highlight the importance of the joint efforts between ECDC and EFSA in providing valuable data for the reduction of zoonotic diseases."

With 1,381 confirmed cases in 2008, *Listeria* infections showed a decrease of 11% compared to 2007. Although less frequent in humans compared to *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella*, *Listeria* is known to have a high mortality rate, the most affected being vulnerable groups such as the elderly. In foodstuffs, the study found *Listeria* above the legal safety limit in some ready-to-eat foods, mostly in smoked fish and heat-treated meat products and cheeses.

Reported cases of Q fever in humans increased from 585 in 2007 to 1,599 in 2008. This disease caused by the bacterium *Coxiella burnetii* results mainly from the inhalation of contaminated dust around infected cattle, sheep and goats. Q fever causes flu-like and gastrointestinal symptoms such as fever and diarrhoea. In animals, the highest infection rates were reported in goats.

Verotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (VTEC) accounted for a total of 3,159 human infections in the EU, representing nearly a 9% increase from the previous year. Among animals and foodstuffs, VTEC was most often reported in cattle and bovine meat. The number of cases of *Yersinia* in humans in 2008 was 8,346, a 7% decrease from 2007, with the bacterium found mostly in pigs and pig meat.

The report also gives an overview of food-borne outbreaks in 2008: 5,332 were recorded, affecting over 45,000 people and causing 32 deaths. Most of the outbreaks were caused by *Salmonella* (35%) followed by viruses and bacterial toxins. The most frequent food sources of these outbreaks were eggs and egg products (23%), pig meat and derived products (10%) and buffet meals (9%).

The report, which covers 15 zoonotic infections, also provides data on other zoonoses, such as brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis

and rabies, and the two parasitic zoonoses trichinellosis and echinococcosis.

The full version with data per country and annexes is available on EFSA's and ECDC's websites.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA publishes second series of opinions on 'general function' health claims

EFSA has published a second series of opinions on a list of 'general function' health claims compiled by Member States and the European Commission. Scientific experts on EFSA's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) assessed all available scientific data submitted to substantiate the 416 health claims. These opinions have been sent to the European Commission and to Member States which will ultimately decide whether to authorise these claims or not.

The evaluations of the NDA Panel were positive when there was sufficient scientific evidence available to support the claim, such as those related to vitamins and minerals. Experts issued unfavourable opinions on most of the claims in the second series due to the poor quality of the information provided to EFSA including:

- lack of information to identify the substance on which the claim is based, e.g. "probiotics";
- lack of evidence that the claimed effect is indeed beneficial to the maintenance or improvement of the functions of the body (e.g. food with "antioxidant properties");
- lack of human studies with reliable measures of the claimed health benefit.

This is the second series of opinions on 'general function' health claims and the Panel is continuing its work on the remaining claims on the list. This phased approach has been adopted due to the very large number of claims received for evaluation



and the requirement, for EFSA, to publish opinions soon after adoption in order to ensure transparency. In carrying out its work, EFSA combines similar claims (e.g. by substance and/or the benefit) in order to form coherent opinions.

EFSA engages regularly with stakeholders and is aware of the importance of clarifying the process followed by the NDA Panel in the evaluation of claims. A briefing document describes how EFSA has followed consistent procedures for evaluation of Article 13.1 health claims, including the use of uniform scientific criteria for substantiation of claims and for the characterisation of foods. The document (updated on 17th November 2009) is available on EFSA's website.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA updates safety advice on six food colours

After reviewing all the available evidence, the European Food Safety Authority's scientific panel on additives, the ANS Panel, has lowered the Acceptable Daily Intakes (ADIs) for the artificial food colours Quinoline Yellow (E104), Sunset Yellow FCF (E110) and Ponceau 4R (E124). As a result, the Panel concluded that exposure to these colours could exceed the new ADIs for both adults and children.

The Panel found that the currently available data did not require a change to the existing ADIs for the three other colours evaluated – Tartrazine (E102), Azorubine/



Carmoisine (E122) and Allura Red AC (E129). According to the Panel, only some children who consume large amounts of food and drink containing Azorubine/Carmoisine or Allura Red AC could exceed the ADIs for these colours.

John Larsen, the Chair of the ANS Panel, said: "Many food colours have been in use for decades since their initial approval and so after such a long period of use we are now looking at the overall data available, including any new evidence on their safety, to help protect European consumers. We are doing this work systematically for all food additives, and

have started with these colours for which some concerns have been raised."

The six colours re-evaluated by the Panel can be used in a range of foodstuffs including soft drinks, bakery products and desserts. The Panel concluded that one of the colours, Tartrazine, may bring about intolerance reactions – such as irritations to the skin – in a small part of the population. For the remaining five colours (Quinoline Yellow, Sunset Yellow FCF, Ponceau 4R, Azorubine/Carmoisine and Allura Red AC), no firm conclusion could be drawn on a possible link with intolerance reactions from the limited scientific evidence available.

EFSA is currently assessing the safety of all individual food additives which are approved for use in the EU, starting with food colours. The European Commission asked EFSA to consider these six colours as a priority after a study was published by Southampton University (McCann *et al*) in 2007 – the so-called

"Southampton study" – linking certain mixtures of these colours and the preservative sodium benzoate with hyperactivity in children.

John Larsen added: *"We have now reduced the ADIs for three of the six colours we assessed, but for different reasons in each case as different data were available on each individual compound. The data which are currently available – including the Southampton study itself – did not substantiate a causal link between the individual colours and possible behavioural effects."*

EFSA's scientific advice will help to inform any follow-up action to be taken by the European Commission and the EU Member States. ■

[For more information.](#)

Previous cargoes of food transport ships evaluated by EFSA



Edible fats and oils can be shipped around the world in containers that are not exclusively reserved for the transport of foodstuffs. However, any substances previously transported in such containers need to be assessed with respect to possible safety concerns. Following a request from the European Commission, EFSA has evaluated the safety of 14 different substances and mixtures that could be transported as cargoes in ship containers which are then used to ship edible fats and oils into the EU.

The nine substances and five mixtures/groups of substances in question have a variety of different industrial or agricultural uses. EFSA's expert Panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM) assessed their safety as previous cargoes on the basis of criteria which were adopted by the Panel earlier this year.

The Panel considered that six of the substances evaluated (calcium nitrate, ammonium nitrate, hydrogen peroxide, isobutanol, kaolin slurry and fructose) would not be of health concern as previous cargoes for containers used to transport edible fats and oils by sea.

However, the Panel considered that cyclohexanol (often used in the manufacture of nylon and pharmaceuticals), cyclohexanone (used, among other things, in the electronics industry) and 2,3-butanediol (which can be used in printing inks, perfumes and plasticisers) did not meet the criteria for acceptability as previous cargoes because of certain toxicological concerns and/or a lack of data to confirm their safety.

The Panel considered that mixtures of fatty acids and mixtures of fatty alcohols would not cause any health concern as previous cargoes as long as they were derived from edible types of oils and fats. The same conclusion was made for fatty ester mixtures produced from fatty acids and fatty alcohols, or from fatty acids and methanol or ethanol, provided that the fatty ester mixtures come from non-contaminated sources (and do not include oils from waste collection sites, for example).

Finally, the Panel did not have enough information on "epoxidised vegetable oils" to evaluate them as previous cargoes (apart from epoxidised soybean oil, which has already been confirmed as an acceptable previous cargo).

The European Commission asked EFSA to assess these particular substances as they have been put forward for possible inclusion in an international list of acceptable previous cargoes to be discussed in the framework of Codex Alimentarius in the near future. ■

[For more information.](#)

EFSA completes first safety assessments of smoke flavourings

The European Food Safety Authority has completed the first ever review of the safety of 11 smoke flavourings used in the European Union. Based on EFSA's work, the European Commission will establish a list of smoke flavouring products authorised for use in foods.

Klaus-Dieter Jany, the chair of EFSA's expert Panel on flavourings (CEF) said: *"The Panel based its conclusions on the limited data which are currently available as well as conservative – or cautious – intake estimates. The Panel expressed safety concerns for several smoke flavourings where intake levels could be relatively close to the levels which may cause negative health effects. However, this does not necessarily mean that people consuming these products will be at risk as, in order to be on the safe side, the consumption estimates deliberately over-estimate intake levels."*

To assess the safety of these smoke flavourings, the CEF Panel asked manufacturers for data on the composition and toxicity of their products as well as details on their intended uses and use levels. Based on this information, the Panel determined the highest intake level at which each product was shown not to cause adverse health effects in animals. This level was then compared to estimated intake levels for humans in order to determine "margins of safety" for each product.

Out of the 11 smoke flavourings evaluated by the Panel, experts found that the margins of safety for two of the products were large enough not to give rise to safety concerns when considering the uses and use levels specified by the manufacturers. For eight others, the smaller margins of safety did give rise to safety concerns and for one of those smoke flavourings the Panel

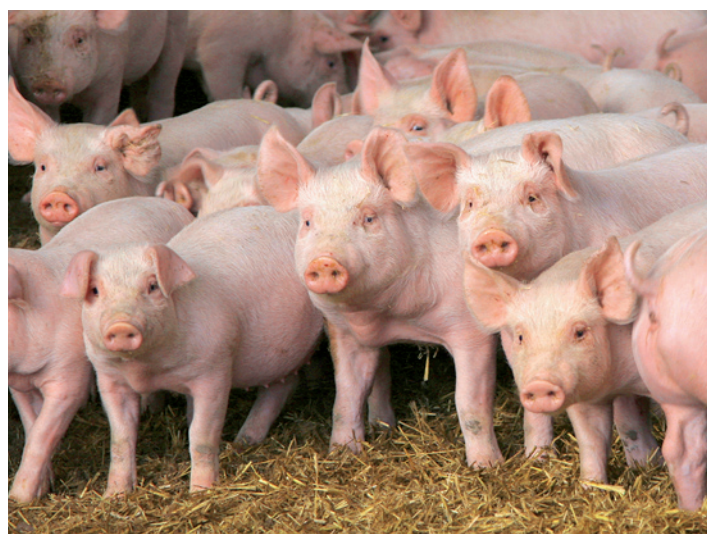


could not rule out concerns regarding possible genotoxicity (damage to the genetic material of cells) given the available data. The Panel could not assess the safety of one further smoke flavouring due to the lack of adequate data available.

Smoke flavourings are products which can be added to certain foods – including meat, fish or cheeses – to give them a "smoked" flavour, as an alternative to traditional smoking. They can also be used as flavourings in other foods such as soups, sauces, drinks and confectionery. All of the smoke flavourings which have now been assessed by EFSA are currently, or have previously been, on the market in the EU.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA publishes results of survey on *Salmonella* in breeding pigs in the EU



The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published the results of an EU-wide survey on *Salmonella* in breeding pigs. The survey indicates that *Salmonella* is commonly detected in holdings with breeding pigs in most EU Member States. The report recommends further studies on surveillance for *Salmonella* in breeding pigs.

The survey was carried out in 24 Member States, Norway and Switzerland. All but two countries found some type of *Salmonella* in their holdings with breeding pigs. On average, *Salmonella* was found in 1 out of 3 holdings with breeding pigs across the EU, but the survey also says that figures vary greatly between Member States.

EU legislation foresees reduction targets for *Salmonella* in foods and animal populations as part of the overall EU strategy to reduce food-borne diseases in humans. EFSA's survey results will support the setting of these reduction targets for breeding pigs.

The survey says that many types of *Salmonella* were found across the EU. The type that was most frequently detected was *Salmonella* Derby, followed by *Salmonella typhimurium*. Many of these types, in particular *S. typhimurium*, are reported to be causes of *Salmonella* infections in humans across the EU.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA assesses arsenic in food

EFSA's panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM) has published an opinion on possible health risks related to the presence of arsenic as a contaminant in food.

The Panel compared amounts of arsenic that people could consume through food and drink to levels which may cause certain health problems. As there was little or no difference between the two, the Panel could not rule out the possibility of a health risk for some people. As a result, the Panel recommended that exposure to inorganic arsenic, the more toxic form, should be reduced.

However, the Panel also highlighted considerable uncertainties in relation to its risk assessment. It stressed the need for more data on levels of organic and inorganic arsenic in different foodstuffs, as well as on the relationship between arsenic intake levels and possible health effects.

Arsenic is a widely-occurring contaminant which occurs both naturally and as a result of human activity. It appears in many different forms, which can be either organic (i.e. containing carbon) or inorganic. Food is the main source of exposure to arsenic for the general population in Europe.

The EFSA opinion mainly focuses on inorganic arsenic, which is often of geological origin and can be found in groundwater. Long-term intake of inorganic arsenic has been associated with a range of health problems, including skin lesions, cardiovascular diseases and some forms of cancer.

The main contributors to overall dietary exposure to inorganic arsenic were considered by the Panel to be cereal grains and cereal-based products, food for special dietary uses (such as algae), bottled water, coffee and beer, rice and rice-based products, fish and vegetables.



EFSA was asked by the European Commission to assess the health risks related to the presence of arsenic as a contaminant in foodstuffs, as there are currently no harmonised maximum levels for arsenic in foodstuffs in Europe. EFSA's scientific advice will help to inform any follow-up action to be taken by the Commission and/or EU Member States.

The CONTAM Panel is currently working on a series of opinions related to metals, such as arsenic, which are found as contaminants in food. Opinions on cadmium and uranium were published earlier this year and a further opinion, on lead, is due to be adopted in the coming months.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA reports aim to harmonise monitoring of two food-borne zoonoses

EFSA has published two new reports aimed at improving the monitoring and reporting in the European Union of two bacteria responsible for zoonotic diseases which can be transmitted from animals and food to humans. These are *Yersinia* (*Yersinia enterocolitica*), which causes the 3rd most frequently reported zoonoses in Europe, and VTEC (verotoxigenic *Escherichia coli*), which although less widespread, can be fatal.

The technical specifications contained in the reports describe how data should be collected and include a risk-based sampling strategy specifying details on the frequency and methods of sampling and laboratory analysis. This will allow Member States to produce more relevant and comparable data to support EFSA in its task of analysing the occurrence of these zoonoses and identifying the sources for human infections with these zoonoses. The harmonisation will also lead to more cost effective monitoring.

Yersinia enterocolitica is a bacterium carried by pigs and to a lesser extent by other animals. When passed to humans it causes the infectious disease called yersiniosis. It most often affects young children and causes such symptoms as fever,

abdominal pain and diarrhoea. In an opinion on monitoring *Y. enterocolitica* in pigs in 2007, experts on EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) Panel recommended that national surveys of pigs at slaughterhouses be carried out depending on the prevalence of the disease in individual Member States.

VTEC infections, although less widespread, can have serious health impact, such as acute kidney failure in young children. EFSA recommends monitoring VTEC in young cattle and sheep at the slaughterhouse at least every three years. It bases these specifications on an opinion by EFSA's BIOHAZ Panel in 2007 on the identification and monitoring of pathogenic VTEC strains in humans.

The guidance documents were drawn up following recent EFSA Community Summary reports which showed that there were insufficient data to assess the sources of human infections from these two zoonotic agents. Access to good quality data is essential for EFSA in providing the best scientific advice to support risk managers in their decisions to protect the health of people throughout the EU.

[For more information on VTEC and Yersinia.](#)

EFSA confirms chicken meat major source of human cases of campylobacteriosis

EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) Panel has adopted an opinion on the extent to which broiler (chicken) meat contributes to human cases of campylobacteriosis. Experts conclude that the handling, preparation and consumption of broiler meat may directly account for 20 to 30% of human cases of campylobacteriosis in the European Union

In Europe, campylobacteriosis is the most common infectious disease transmissible from animals to humans through food and the opinion confirms previous findings that poultry meat appears to be a major, if not the largest, source of human infection. The BIOHAZ Panel estimates that the number of actual cases of human campylobacteriosis is likely to be much higher than officially reported.

BIOHAZ Panel Chair, Professor Dan Collins said: *"We need to interpret our conclusions with care since data on sources of Campylobacter are scarce for the majority of Member States and in some cases they are unavailable."* The BIOHAZ Panel recommends active surveillance of campylobacteriosis in all Member States, including efforts to better quantify the level of unreported human cases.

Campylobacteriosis is generally contracted through the ingestion of bacteria originating from contaminated food or contaminated water. The disease which can lead to diarrhoea, abdominal cramps and fever, and affects children, young adults and the elderly.



EFSA's review of the different sources of human *Campylobacter* infections represents the first step in broader work in this area that is expected to be completed in 2010. At the request of the Commission, the BIOHAZ Panel will identify and rank the possible control options and propose specific targets to reduce *Campylobacter* occurrence at the different stages of the broiler meat chain. This overall work will support risk managers in establishing appropriate measures to reduce the number of cases of human campylobacteriosis in the EU. ■

[For more information.](#)

> EFSA at work

EFSA issues guidance on the collection of national food consumption data



EFSA has issued guidance on methods and procedures to be followed when collecting national data on food consumption. This document will contribute to the harmonisation of data collection on dietary intake at a European level. The publication of the document is a first and important step towards the preparation of a Pan-European Food Consumption Survey "What's on the Menu in Europe?" (EU Menu) (see also p.1). EFSA proposes to launch the implementation of the data collection phase of this project with the first five Member States in 2012.

The Survey will address the need for detailed and harmonised food consumption data, which are essential for improving the accuracy and reliability of the exposure estimates and, consequently, of the risk assessments carried out by EFSA Panels as well as by other experts across Europe.

The Guidance has been endorsed by the Expert group on Food Consumption Data, a network comprising representatives of all Member States set up by EFSA in 2007 to address the absence of such comparable data at European level. ■

[For more information.](#)

Introducing the EFSA Journal: EFSA science at your fingertips

EFSA has made it significantly easier to access, browse and search its scientific work through the launch of a dedicated web area for its EFSA Journal.

The Journal is an open-access, online scientific journal that conveniently brings together the Authority's scientific outputs in one area, making them even more accessible than before. The new online presentation of the EFSA Journal will facilitate referencing of the Authority's scientific work in scientific literature and may enable bibliographical databases to index EFSA's scientific outputs thereby raising awareness of EFSA's work amongst the academic community worldwide. It will also raise visibility of the vast body of work being carried out by EFSA's Panel members spanning the entire food chain covering food and feed safety, nutrition, animal health and welfare, plant health and plant protection.

To keep up-to-date readers need only to subscribe online to

receive titles from the previous month by email or through the dedicated RSS feed. Alternatively online users can quickly consult the latest articles, browse through previous issues dating back to EFSA's first outputs in 2003 or use the advanced search features to find specific topics of interest. The EFSA Journal also offers a new function to facilitate citation of EFSA scientific outputs and the "send" option.

[For more information.](#)



> Meeting reports

EFSA issues ESCO report on risks and benefits of folic acid

The EFSA Scientific Cooperation Working Group (ESCO WG) on the analysis of risks and benefits of fortification of food with folic acid concluded a project which reviewed scientific evidence regarding high intakes of folic acid. The project also looked into the need for a review of current guidance on tolerable upper levels of folic acid for all population groups.

In its report, the Working Group suggests that current data are insufficient to allow a full quantitative risk assessment of risks linked to folic acid and that scientific developments within this area should be closely monitored. As for other ESCO Working Groups, the final outcome of this project is not a Scientific Opinion - which remains the task of EFSA's Panels and Scientific Committee - but aims to help EFSA decide whether a further assessment of possible risks linked to high intakes of folic acid would be appropriate at this time. The report will be now reviewed by EFSA's Panel on Dietetic products, nutrition and allergies (NDA) in the light of their work programme.

The project collected, compiled and analysed information on recommended and actual intakes of folic acid and folate. Among the issues considered were: national congenital anomalies registries, prevalence of neural tube defects (NTDs),

recommended dietary intakes of folic acid and folate, practices of voluntary and mandatory folic acid food fortification within European countries, and use of supplements, also in relation to NTDs.

The report was also informed by the discussions at a scientific meeting held in Uppsala on 21-22 January 2009 where over 60 scientific experts from the European Union, Switzerland, the United States and Canada discussed and debated the latest scientific developments regarding folate and folic acid.

While the health benefits of folic acid in relation to the reduction in risk of neural tube defects are well established through human intervention studies, other health benefits are not supported by conclusive evidence (e.g. reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease). The report also explored the relationship between folic acid and cancer risk. It concluded that current data are insufficient to allow a full quantitative risk assessment of folic acid and cancer, and that scientific developments within this area should be closely monitored.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA workshop on botanicals

Athens, 24 November 2009

On 24 November 2009, EFSA held a workshop in Athens on botanicals and botanical preparations used as ingredients in food supplements. Representatives of Member States' food safety authorities, the European Commission, the European Medicines Agency and plant-based food supplement manufacturers attended the meeting.

The purpose of this initiative, organised by EFSA together with its Advisory Forum, was to present the guidance document for

the safety assessment of botanicals and botanical preparations that was adopted by EFSA's Scientific Committee and published in September 2009.

The aim was to develop a common understanding of how industry and competent authorities in EU Member States should apply the science-based method for safety assessment described in the EFSA guidance document, strengthening their safety assessments of botanicals and botanical preparations.

[For more information.](#)

Better surveillance needed to fight spread of antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic infections

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), the European Medicines Agency (EMA) and the European Commission's Scientific Committee on Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) have published a joint scientific opinion on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) focused on infections transmitted to humans from animals and food (zoonoses).

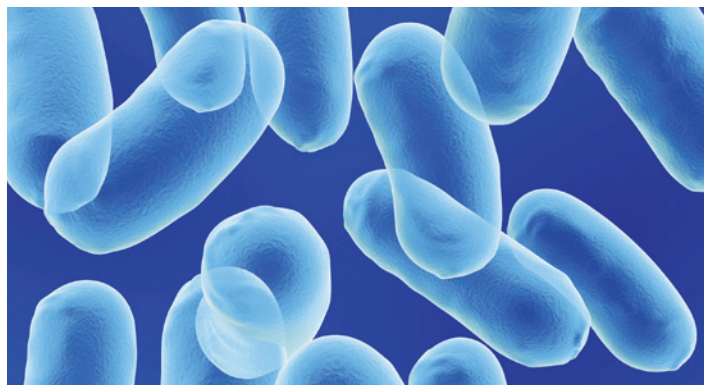
The joint opinion concludes that bacterial resistance to antimicrobials has increased in recent years worldwide, making it more difficult to treat some human and animal infections. It says surveillance activities should be strengthened and the development of new antimicrobials and new strategies to combat the spread of resistance encouraged. Research is needed on other strategies to control infectious diseases in animals, such as vaccination programmes.

The opinion says there is specific concern about bacterial resistance to antibiotics used in the treatment of *Salmonella* and *Campylobacter* infections - the two most reported zoonotic infections in Europe, and points out which antibiotics are considered of high concern for their treatment. It says that although the use of antibiotics is considered the main factor in the development of bacterial resistance, the use of biocides (including disinfectants, antiseptics and preservatives) may also contribute to bacterial resistance.

"Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest threats to public health in the European Union and a priority area of work at ECDC. The major cause of antibiotic resistance in humans remains the use of antibiotics in human medicine. If the misuse and overuse of antibiotics continue, we will lose the means to treat serious infectious diseases," said Dominique L. Monnet, Senior Expert and Coordinator of the Antimicrobial Resistance and Healthcare-Associated Infections at ECDC.

The opinion on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic infections highlights that globalisation of food trade and frequent travel to countries outside the EU make it difficult to compare resistance data from surveillance programmes at EU level and to assess the impact of those strains coming from outside the EU. It also adds that the differences in levels of antimicrobial resistance in the various EU countries make it difficult to have a single strategy to fight against this threat.

"Resistance is caused by the ability of bacteria to undergo changes, given their increasing exposure to antimicrobials used in human



and veterinary medicine. Most antimicrobial-resistant strains of zoonotic bacteria are found in the gastrointestinal tract of healthy food animals, particularly poultry, pigs, and cattle," said Professor Dan Collins, Chair of EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) Panel.

Food-borne infections caused by these bacteria very often originate from contamination during slaughter of animals or food processing. The opinion says that at present there are no data available to demonstrate that the use of antibiotics in human medicine may also have an impact on the resistance of zoonotic bacteria.

The three EU agencies and the SCENIHR have worked together on this issue, sharing their scientific expertise and advising EU decision-makers on risks and making recommendations for action. *"This exercise has been an example of how different institutions within the EU can successfully work together to tackle the issue of antimicrobial resistance which currently represents a significant threat to human health,"* David Mackay, Head of Unit Veterinary Medicines and Product Data Management at the European Medicines Agency, said.

The opinion on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic infections was published ahead of European Antibiotic Awareness Day on November 18, which focused on resistance to antibiotics. The opinion confirms previous recommendations that prudent use of antimicrobials in animals should be strongly promoted and that veterinarians and farmers should be educated on strategies to minimise antimicrobial resistance. Other previous recommendations said antibiotics such as fluoroquinolones and cephalosporins should be reserved for treating conditions which respond poorly to other antimicrobials. ■

[For more information.](#)

EFSA launches a knowledge database on 3-MCPD esters

Research institutes, industry bodies and other parties that carry out or commission research projects on 3-MCPD esters are invited to submit information on these projects to EFSA. Further data are needed to assess the possible risks posed by these contaminants to human health. This database will serve as a platform for sharing information and will help to ensure that effective progress is made in this field. EFSA will regularly update the database with the input received. ■

[For more information.](#)



EFSA launches cooperation project on non-plastic food contact materials

The European Food Safety Authority has set up an EFSA scientific cooperation (ESCO) working group to collect and analyse information on the safety of substances used in non-plastic materials which come into contact with food.

This follows a number of incidents in recent years in which certain substances used in non-plastic food contact materials (such as inks and adhesives) have been found to migrate into foods. Whilst EU rules specify that all materials coming into contact with foods must be safe, many non-plastic components of food contact materials - unlike plastic materials - are not subject to specific provisions at the European level.

The working group has been created following discussions on this issue at EFSA's Advisory Forum, which brings together representatives of national food safety authorities. It is composed of experts from the EU Member States on the regulation and safety assessment of food contact materials, as well as members of EFSA's scientific Panel which works on this issue.

The group will collect information and identify expertise which is available in the EU Member States on the evaluation of substances used in non-plastic food contact materials. It will also identify strengths and weaknesses in different approaches used for risk assessment, propose criteria for future safety evaluations and suggest further actions to be taken.



Following discussions with stakeholders, the group will aim to present a report to EFSA's Executive Director by the end of March 2011.

The first meeting of the working group took place on 17 February 2010 at EFSA's headquarters in Parma.

World Health Organisation delegation visits EFSA

Parma, 26 October 2009



A delegation of the World Health Organisation (WHO) visited the European Food Safety Authority in Parma on 26 October 2009.

EFSA and WHO representatives presented their work programmes in the area of food safety. Group discussions followed, focusing on specific areas such as animal health and welfare, pesticides, zoonoses, nutrition, food additives, contaminants and general principles of risk assessment and risk communications. Future cooperation activities and harmonisation steps were also identified.

The WHO delegation included Jørgen Schlundt and Angelika Tritscher from the Department of Food Safety, Zoonoses and Foodborne Diseases, Hilde Kruse from the Regional Office for Europe and Chizuru Nishida from Department of Nutrition for Health and Development.

International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group meets at EFSA

On 4-5 November 2009, the International Food Chemical Safety Liaison Group met with EFSA in Parma. Representatives of food safety authorities from several EU Member States, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, USA, Canada, and the European Commission discussed trends and developments on various aspects of food chemical safety.

During the meeting, attendees gave an update on specific topics. This included: perchlorate levels in foods; toxicological studies on tutin - a natural toxin occurring in some New Zealand honey; methyl mercury exposure and the risks/benefits

of eating fish. How to evaluate the safety of botanicals; and the results from assessments of arsenic, lead, cadmium, bisphenol A and pyrrolizidine alkaloids were also discussed. In addition, there was an exchange of lessons learnt from the melamine crisis.

There were also discussions on newly emerging issues and future topics of relevance for the group such as nanotechnology in food and feed, and consideration of food intolerances when assessing food additives. In addition, the group covered incident prevention including identifying emerging risks.

Calls for data on permitted food additives

Under EFSA's ongoing work on food additives, the Authority's Panel on Food Additives and Nutrient Sources added to Food (ANS) launched three calls for data on three groups of food additives. They cover preservatives and antioxidants; emulsifiers, stabilisers and gelling agents; and waxes. Further calls for data are planned to be launched in the first half of 2010 and in following years.

According to EU law, EFSA must re-evaluate all food additives which were evaluated and permitted for use in food in the EU before 20 January 2009. EFSA has already begun to issue advice on food colours. The evaluation of this group of food additives needs to be finalised by June 2011.

To prepare for the re-evaluation of currently authorised additives, the ANS Panel launched calls for data to obtain information on preservatives, antioxidants, emulsifiers, stabilisers, gelling agents, and waxes.

The Panel is specifically interested in: study reports from the dossiers that were originally evaluated; information on the data about safety in use of the food additives not previously reviewed by the former Scientific Committee on Food and the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) specifications, such as information on particle size, and relevant physiochemical characteristics and properties; manufacturing processes; analytical methods available for determination in food; and present use and use patterns.

The deadlines for the call on:

- a) waxes was 23 March 2010.
- b) preservatives and antioxidants is 23 April 2010.
- c) emulsifiers, stabilisers and gelling agents is 23 May 2010. ■

[For more information on the call for preservatives/antioxidants, emulsifiers, stabilisers and gelling agents and waxes.](#)

Request for data on brominated flame retardants levels in foodstuffs

EFSA's Unit on Data Collection and Exposure (DATEX) has launched a call for data among Member States on five groups of brominated flame retardants. This will assist the Panel on contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM) in delivering advice to the European Commission on the risks to human health related to the presence of these compounds in foodstuffs.

Brominated flame retardants are man-made chemicals that are added to a wide variety of consumer/commercial products to improve their fire resistance. However, concern has been raised since several brominated flame retardants have been found in

the environment, including feed and food, and in humans. This has led to bans on the production and use of certain formulations of these compounds, such as Penta- and Octa-polybrominated diphenyl ether (PBDEs) commercial mixtures.

The closing date for data submissions on PBDEs and Poly-brominated Biphenyls (PBBs) was 26 February 2010. For Hexa-bromocyclododecane (HBCD), the closing date is 2 July 2010, and for Tetrabromobisphenol A (TBBP-A), and other phenols and emerging brominated flame retardants, it is 20 December 2010. ■

[For more information.](#)

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/CONTAM/2009/01

Toxicological study related to 3-MCPD esters

University of Parma (Italy)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/01/1

Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data

National Food Institute and National Veterinary Institute of the Technical University of Denmark (Denmark)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/01/2

Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data

Hungarian Food Safety Office (Hungary)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/01/3

Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data

Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) (Germany)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/01/4

Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data

Food Research Institute (Slovakia)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/01/5

Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data

Austrian Agency for Health and Food Safety – AGES (Austria)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/03

Probabilistic tool to estimate “usual” intake distribution in the Comprehensive Food Consumption Database

RIVM/ RIKILT –National Institute for Public Health Environment/ Institute of Food Safety (The Netherlands)

CFP/EFSA/DATEX/2009/02

Pilot study in the view of a Pan-European dietary survey - Infants and children

RIVM –National Institute for Public Health Environment, Scientific Institute of Public Health (Belgium), National Food Institute of the Technical University of Denmark (Denmark), National Institute of Public Health (Slovakia)

CFP/EFSA/SCAF/2008/01

Development of a framework for the risk assessment of chemical mixtures – A toxicological database on relevant chemical mixtures to food safety

Central Science Laboratory (UK)

Article 36 reports published

Models for pest's epidemiology: review, documentation and evaluation for Pest Risk Analysis (Mopest)

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/28e.htm>

Bee Mortality and Bee Surveillance in Europe

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/27e.htm>

ESCO report on analysis of risks and benefits of fortification of food with folic acid

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/3e.htm>

Survey on the use of veterinary medicinal products in third countries

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/23e.htm>

Scientific information on mycotoxins and natural plant toxicants

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/24e.htm>

Development of harmonised schemes for the monitoring and reporting of *Sarcocystis* in animals and foodstuffs in the European Union

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/33e.htm>

Development of harmonised schemes for the monitoring and reporting of *Cysticercus* in animals and foodstuffs in the European Union

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/34e.htm>

Development of harmonised schemes for the monitoring and reporting of *Trichinella* in animals and foodstuffs in the European Union

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/35e.htm>

Development of harmonised schemes for the monitoring and reporting of *Echinococcus* in animals and foodstuffs in the European Union

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/36e.htm>

EFSA launches public consultation on guidance document on food flavourings



The European Food Safety Authority's Panel on food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings, and processing aids (CEF) launched a public consultation on a draft guidance document on food flavourings. The document specifies which data industry should submit to EFSA for the safety evaluation of new flavourings.

A common authorisation procedure for new flavourings, based on safety assessments carried out by EFSA, is currently being put in place in the European Union. Meanwhile, EFSA will soon complete the safety evaluation of some 2,800 flavourings which are already on the market. The draft guidance document on new flavourings reflects the experience gained by EFSA during this process.

All stakeholders – in particular future applicants – were able to comment on the draft guidance document via the EFSA website until 7 December 2009. The guidelines will be finalised in early 2010, taking into consideration comments received during the public consultation.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA consults on guidance on risk-benefit assessment of food

The European Food Safety Authority's Scientific Committee has published guidance on the risk-benefit assessment of food for public consultation. As foods provide health benefits but can sometimes also present health risks – for example, fruit and vegetables provide key nutrients but can sometimes also contain potentially harmful substances such as nitrates – it is important for decision-makers to be able to take into account the net health impact of different foods.

EFSA's Scientific Committee recommends a three-step approach consisting of: an initial assessment which considers whether a risk-benefit assessment is actually needed or, alternatively, if the health risk clearly outweighs the health benefit (or vice versa); a refined assessment aimed at quantifying estimates of risk and benefit at relevant exposure levels; and finally, a full comparison of the combined risk and benefit to establish a net health impact value.

The Scientific Committee specifies that risk-benefit assessments should be based on clearly defined objectives to be agreed beforehand between risk-benefit assessors and decision-makers. The outlined approach should help to save time and

resources as the assessors would report to decision-makers after each stage of the process, enabling the latter to decide whether sufficient information is already available for decisions to be taken without having to proceed through all of the steps.

The guidance document highlights that risk-benefit assessment is a complex process that presents many challenges, such as limited data on benefit assessment. It focuses on risk-benefit assessment with regard to human health and does not address other aspects which decision-makers may need to take into account such as social, economic, environmental or ethical considerations.

All stakeholders and interested parties will be able to provide their comments until 15 April 2010. In line with its policy on openness and transparency, EFSA will publish a summary report of the comments received on its website and will take these comments into consideration before finalising the guidance document.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA consults on the evaluation of safety and effectiveness of substances used for removal of microbial surface contamination



EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) Panel has published for public consultation a revision of the joint guidance document of the BIOHAZ and former AFC Panel for the submission of applications on the substances to be used for removing microbial contamination from the surface of foods of animal origin.

The guidance includes data and examples of study designs for the evaluation of these substances with regard to their safety for consumers and the environment, and their effectiveness in

decreasing the level of microbial contamination. The guidance also indicates how the evaluation of the possible development of antimicrobial resistance triggered by decontamination agents should be carried out.

The information and data requested in this guidance concerning toxicological aspects (chapter 6) correspond to what was previously indicated in the joint AFC/BIOHAZ guidance document published in 2006.

All interested parties were asked to provide comments up to 22 February, following the date of publication of the guidance document. In line with its policy on openness and transparency, EFSA will publish on its website a summary report of the comments received and will take them into consideration in finalising its report, which will be published in early 2010. ■

[For more information.](#)

> Latest mandates received

Mandates accepted: October-December 2009

Information on all other on-going requests is available in EFSA's [register of questions](#).

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Database of guidance on different toxicity end-points, risk assessment methodologies and data collection related to food, feed, animal health and welfare and plant health

Deadline:	31-Dec-09	Mandate number:	M-2009-0317
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Food Additives & Nutrient Sources (ANS)

JECFA opinion on lycopene

Deadline:	31-Dec-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0294
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Preparation of pre-evaluation documents, including toxicological and non-toxicological data, to support the re-evaluation of six waxes

Deadline:	09-Dec-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0341
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Request for EFSA to perform a scientific risk assessment on food additive: glycerol esters of tall oil rosin

Deadline:	15-Oct-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0282
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Request for EFSA to provide technical assistance relating to a revised exposure assessment for lycopene as a food colour

Deadline:	31-Dec-09	Mandate number:	M-2009-0237
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Request to the European Food Safety Authority for scientific advice concerning the safety of trivalent chromium – Cr (III)

Deadline:	31-Dec-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0278
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Request for EFSA to provide a scientific opinion in relation to the safety of erythritol (E968) in light of new data, including a new paediatric study on the gastrointestinal tolerability of erythritol

Deadline:	31-May-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0236
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Request for EFSA to perform a scientific risk assessment on a food additive: anionic methacrylate copolymer

Deadline:	30-Sep-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0232
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Commission request for a scientific opinion on chromium picolinate added for nutritional purposes to foodstuffs

Deadline:	31-Jul-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0200
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Request for EFSA to perform a scientific risk assessment on a food additive: neutral methacrylate copolymer

Deadline:	28-Feb-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0175
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Commission request for a scientific opinion on ferrous ammonium phosphate added for nutritional purposes to foodstuffs

Deadline:	31-Jul-10	Mandate number:	M-2009-0118
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Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Food safety considerations of novel H1N1 influenza virus infections in humans

Deadline: 31-May-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0346

Use of recycled hot water as a decontamination technique for carcasses

Deadline: 30-Jun-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0292

Foodborne viruses

Deadline: 31-Dec-11 Mandate number: M-2009-0279

Joint EFSA/ECDC mandate on links between human and animal TSEs

Deadline: 31-Dec-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0221

Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings (CEF)

Request for an opinion on JECFA evaluations of flavouring substances in preparation of a positive list

Deadline: 31-Dec-09 Mandate number: M-2008-0126

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the CEF Unit for the creation and the management of an ESCO Working Group with the aim to collect information on the evaluation status of non plastics parts of Food Contact Materials

Deadline: 31-Mar-11 Mandate number: M-2009-0342

Recycling processes

Deadline: 31-Dec-10 Mandate numbers: EFSA-Q-2010-00093, EFSA-Q-2010-00092, EFSA-Q-2010-00091, EFSA-Q-2010-00090, EFSA-Q-2010-00089, EFSA-Q-2010-00088, EFSA-Q-2010-00087, EFSA-Q-2010-00068, EFSA-Q-2010-00067, EFSA-Q-2010-00066, EFSA-Q-2010-00065, EFSA-Q-2010-00064, EFSA-Q-2010-00063, EFSA-Q-2010-00062, EFSA-Q-2010-00061, EFSA-Q-2010-00060, EFSA-Q-2010-00051, EFSA-Q-2010-00050, EFSA-Q-2010-00049, EFSA-Q-2010-00048, EFSA-Q-2010-00047, EFSA-Q-2010-00046, EFSA-Q-2010-00026, EFSA-Q-2010-00025, EFSA-Q-2010-00024, EFSA-Q-2010-00023, EFSA-Q-2010-00022, EFSA-Q-2010-00021, EFSA-Q-2010-00020, EFSA-Q-2010-00019, EFSA-Q-2010-00005, EFSA-Q-2010-00004, EFSA-Q-2010-00003, EFSA-Q-2010-00002, EFSA-Q-2009-00965, EFSA-Q-2009-00964, EFSA-Q-2009-00963, EFSA-Q-2009-00962, EFSA-Q-2009-00961, EFSA-Q-2009-00960, EFSA-Q-2009-00959, EFSA-Q-2009-00958, EFSA-Q-2009-00946, EFSA-Q-2009-00918, EFSA-Q-2009-00916, EFSA-Q-2009-00899, EFSA-Q-2009-00898, EFSA-Q-2009-00897, EFSA-Q-2009-00865, EFSA-Q-2009-00850, EFSA-Q-2009-00849, EFSA-Q-2009-00783, EFSA-Q-2009-00773, EFSA-Q-2009-00772, EFSA-Q-2009-00757, EFSA-Q-2009-00734, EFSA-Q-2009-00707, EFSA-Q-2009-00706, EFSA-Q-2009-00682, EFSA-Q-2008-699, EFSA-Q-2010-00100, EFSA-Q-2010-00101, EFSA-Q-2010-00102, EFSA-Q-2010-00103, EFSA-Q-2010-00104, EFSA-Q-2010-00105, EFSA-Q-2010-00121, EFSA-Q-2010-00122, EFSA-Q-2010-00123, EFSA-Q-2010-00126, EFSA-Q-2010-00146

Octyltriethoxysilane (OTES)-modified titanium dioxide

Deadline: 17-Jun-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0307

Request to perform scientific risk assessments on flavouring substances

Deadline: 31-Dec-09 Mandate number: M-2008-0032

Risk Assessment of bisphenol A

Deadline: 31-May-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0273

Data Collection & Exposure (DATEX)

Request for data collection templates for ethyl carbamate and 3-MCPD ESTERS

Deadline: 31-Jan-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0318

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:

0 Article 14 applications [For more information.](#)
4 Article 13.5 applications [For more information.](#)
0 Article 13 applications [For more information.](#)

Latest mandates received

Request to the European Food Safety Authority for an opinion in relation to the authorisation procedure for health claims pursuant to Reg.(EC)n°1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods

Deadline: 30-Apr-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0314

Technical report concerning a briefing document related to the EFSA assessment of health claims as referred to in Article 13 of Regulation EC 1924/2006 on nutrition and health claims made on foods.

Deadline: 30-Nov-09 Mandate number: M-2008-1061

Safety of *Lentinus edodes*

Deadline: 25-Jun-10 Mandate number: M-2009-0248

Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum (SC&AF)

Preparation of a report on applicability of psychochemical data, QSARs and read-across in threshold of toxicological concern assessments

Deadline: 31-Dec-10 Mandate number: M-2008-1014

> Opinions and other documents

List of adopted opinions and other documents per unit: October-December 2009

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

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Assessment of the application of systematic review methodology into the food and feed safety field and the risk assessment process

Adopted on: 18-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-717

Good practice in conducting scientific assessments in animal health using modelling

Adopted on: 02-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00409

Food Additives & Nutrient Sources (ANS)

Scientific Opinion on the use of natamycin (E 235) as a food additive

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-009
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1412.htm>

Scientific Opinion on the use of polyglycitol syrup as a food additive

Adopted on: 24-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-072
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1413.htm>

Scientific Opinion on the use of ferric sodium EDTA as a source of iron added for nutritional purposes to foods for the general population (including food supplements) and to foods for particular nutritional uses

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-016
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1414.htm>

Scientific Opinion on the use of resorcinol as a food additive

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-123
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1411.htm>

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Analytical sensitivity of approved TSE rapid tests

Adopted on: 10-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00687
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1436.htm>

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

Adopted on: 10-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00620
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1429.htm>

Maintenance of the list of QPS microorganisms intentionally added to food or feed (2009 update)

Adopted on: 10-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00459
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1431.htm>

Quantification of the risk posed by broiler meat to human campylobacteriosis in the EU

Adopted on: 09-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-469
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1437.htm>

Trends of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in zoonotic infections

Adopted on: 22-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-781
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1372.htm>

Statement on technical assistance related to the EFSA opinion on transformation of animal by-products into biogas and compost

Adopted on: 21-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00654
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1370.htm>

Genetic TSE resistance in goats in all Member States

Adopted on: 21-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00448
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1371.htm>

Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings (CEF)**Consideration of ethyl maltol and two 6-keto-1,4-dioxane derivatives substances evaluated by JECFA (65th meeting)**

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00909

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

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00908

Consideration of linear and branched-chain aliphatic unsaturated, unconjugated alcohols, aldehydes, acids, and related esters evaluated by JECFA (61st meeting)

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00907

Benzyl alcohols, benzaldehydes, a related acetal, benzoic acids and related esters from chemical group 23

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00906

Furfuryl and furan derivatives with and without additional side-chain substituents and heteroatoms from chemical group 14

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00905

Esters of branched- and straight-chain aliphatic saturated primary alcohols and of one secondary alcohol, and branched- and straight-chain unsaturated carboxylic acids from chemical groups 1, 2 and 5

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00904

Safety evaluation of the substance, cyclic oligomers of (butylene terephthalate), CAS No. 263244-54-8, for use in food contact materials

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-096
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1399.htm>

Safety evaluation of the substance, alkyl(C10-C21)sulphonic acid, esters with phenol, CAS No. 91082-17-6, for use in food contact materials

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00733
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1398.htm>

Statement on the safety evaluation of smoke flavourings primary products: interpretation of the margin of safety

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00764
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1325.htm>

Safety evaluation of the substance, 2,4-diamino-6-hydroxypyrimidine, CAS No. 56-06-4, for use in food contact materials

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00681
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1397.htm>

Safety of smoke flavour Primary Products (Adopted on: 26-Nov-09):

TRADISMOKE™ A MAX Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-257
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1394.htm>

AM 01 Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-269
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1396.htm>

Scansmoke R909 Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-259
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1395.htm>

Aliphatic branched-chain saturated and unsaturated alcohols, aldehydes, acids, and related esters evaluated by JECFA

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-056

Aliphatic, linear alpha,beta-unsaturated aldehydes, acids and related alcohols, acetals and esters evaluated by JECFA

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-055
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1401.htm>

Furan-substituted aliphatic hydrocarbons, alcohols, aldehydes, ketones, carboxylic acids and related esters, sulfides, disulfides and ethers evaluated by JECFA

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-0325

Sulfur-substituted furan derivativs used as flavouring agents evaluated by JECFA

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-032Q

Risk assessment of salts of authorised acids, phenols or alcohols used in plastic food contact materials

Adopted on: 14-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00683
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1364.htm>

Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM)

Evaluation of substances as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00686
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1391.htm>

Marine biotoxins in shellfish – Palytoxin group

Adopted on: 26-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-065G
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1393.htm>

Arsenic in food

Adopted on: 12-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-425
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1351.htm>

Data Collection & Exposure (DATEX)

Report on the result from the monitoring of veterinary medicinal product residues in food of animal origin in the Member States

Adopted on: 18-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00845

General principles for the collection of national food consumption data in the view of a Pan-European dietary survey

Adopted on: 11-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00758
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1435.htm>

Nutrition (NDA)

EFSA has issued 31 scientific opinions on general function claims (Art. 13.1), covering 416 health relationships and 9 opinions related to Article 14 and 13.5 health claims applications between October and December 2009.

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/nda/ndaclaims.htm>

Scientific advice concerning the appropriate age for introduction of complementary food for infants

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-311
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1423.htm>

Population reference intakes for carbohydrates and dietary fibre

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-467
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1462.htm>

Population reference intakes for fats, including saturated fatty acids, polyunsaturated fatty acids and monounsaturated fatty acids, trans fatty acids, and cholesterol

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-466
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1461.htm>

Population reference intakes for water

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-464
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1459.htm>

Population Reference Intakes: Principles for deriving dietary reference values

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-463
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1458.htm>

Guidance on food-based dietary guidelines

Adopted on: 04-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-015c
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1460.htm>

Briefing document for Member States and European Commission on the evaluation of Article 13.1 health claims

Adopted on: 11-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00902
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1386.htm>

Scientific Opinion related to a notification from Genecor International BV on barley beta-amylase from unmalted barley to be used in starch degradation to produce glucose syrups rich in maltose – for permanent exemption from labelling

Adopted on: 15-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00308
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1361.htm>

Safety of 'CLA (Conjugated Linoleic Acid)-rich Oil' as food ingredient (Lipid Nutrition)

Adopted on: 15-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-745

ZOONOSSES (Data Collection)**CSR on zoonoses, zoonotic agents and food-borne outbreaks in 2008**

Adopted on: 23-Dec-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00695
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1496.htm>

Analysis of the baseline survey on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in holdings with breeding pigs in the EU, 2008 - Part A: *Salmonella* prevalence estimates

Adopted on: 30-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-043A
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1377.htm>

Analysis of the baseline survey on the prevalence of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) in holdings with breeding pigs, in the EU, 2008 - Part A: MRSA prevalence estimates

Adopted on: 15-Nov-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-417A
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1376.htm>

Technical specifications for harmonised national surveys on *Yersinia enterocolitica* in slaughter pigs

Adopted on: 30-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-725
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1374.htm>

Technical specifications for the monitoring and reporting of verotoxigenic *Escherichia coli* (VTEC) on animals and food (VTEC surveys on animals and food)

Adopted on: 30-Oct-09 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-265
<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/scdocs/scdoc/1366.htm>

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