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European Food Safety Authority

EFSA in focus FOOD

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> Key topics

EFSA assesses possible health risk for children from nitrate in leafy vegetables

EFSA's Panel on Contaminants (CONTAM) published a statement in December 2010 on the possible acute health effects of nitrate in infants and young children consuming spinach and lettuce. The Panel concludes that levels of nitrate in these vegetables are not of health concern for most children. It notes, however, that infants and young children aged 1-3 years who consume high amounts of spinach with high nitrate levels could at times reach an intake level for which a risk of methaemoglobinaemia - a condition that reduces oxygen supply to the body - cannot be excluded. The Panel also provides advice to the European Commission on maximum levels of nitrate in leafy vegetables.

This statement complements EFSA's scientific opinion of 2008 in which the CONTAM Panel compared risks and benefits of exposure to nitrates in vegetables. Following this opinion, the European Commission asked EFSA to provide more information on potential acute health effects of nitrate in infants and children.

Nitrate occurs naturally in vegetables and particularly high levels are found in leafy vegetables such as lettuce and spinach. In the human body >>>

> STOP PRESS

EFSA reviews safety of caramel colours

EFSA's Panel on Food Additives and Nutrient Sources added to Food (ANS) has assessed the safety of a group of caramel colours authorised for use in food in the European Union. The Panel has revised the previously established Acceptable Daily Intakes (ADIs) for these colours and set a group ADI covering all caramel colours. Based on all available data, the Panel concluded that these caramel colours are neither genotoxic, nor carcinogenic and that there is no evidence to show that they have any adverse effects on human reproduction or for the developing child. The Panel also looked at the safety of some by-products resulting from the production of these colours and recommended to keep their levels in caramel colours as low as technologically possible.

For more information.

nitrate is converted into nitrite, which at high levels can lead to methaemoglobinaemia.

Based on the analysis of new and more detailed food consumption data now available for children, the Panel concludes that levels of nitrate in lettuce are not of health concern for children; however, infants and young children aged 1-3 years who eat large amounts of spinach (over 200g) on a given day could be exposed to high levels of nitrates. In these cases, the Panel considers that for some young children the possibility of a risk of methaemoglobinaemia cannot be excluded. Furthermore, it recommends that children suffering from bacterial gastrointestinal infections should not be given spinach because these infections result in a higher conversion of nitrate to nitrite, thereby increasing the risk of methaemoglobinaemia. The Panel indicates that inappropriate storage of cooked leafy vegetables (for instance, vegetables stored at room temperature over long periods) can also result in the conversion of nitrate to nitrite. Furthermore, the conversion of nitrate to nitrite is accelerated when vegetables are pureed.

Spinach and lettuce are subject to EU legislation, which establishes maximum levels of nitrate in foods. The Panel found that 1% of lettuce samples and 5% of spinach samples tested exceeded the current maximum levels. In answer to the Commission's request, the Panel advises that replacing derogations in place in certain Member States with slightly higher maximum levels for nitrate in leafy vegetables would have a minor impact on the exposure of young children.

For more information.

EFSA and ECDC review scientific evidence on possible links between TSEs in animals and humans

EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) published in December 2010 a joint opinion reviewing the latest available scientific information on possible links between Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) in animals and humans. Current epidemiological and laboratory tools and methods for the evaluation of possible association of animal and human TSEs were also critically evaluated.

In the opinion, EFSA and ECDC have undertaken the first comprehensive review of epidemiological and laboratory studies on possible links between TSEs in animals and humans at EU level. The opinion builds on previous work carried out by EFSA on the zoonotic potential of single TSE agents, as well as a considerable number of other scientific studies on prion diseases.

The findings in the opinion confirm that at present the only TSE proven to be zoonotic (i.e. transmissible from animals to humans), remains Classical Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), known in humans as variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD).

Epidemiological evidence shows that the most common form of TSE in humans is sporadic Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (sCJD). The cause of sporadic CJD remains uncertain. While scientific research to date has not identified an environmental source of infection, the Panel could not exclude the possibility that a small number of cases could be zoonotic.

Regarding Classical scrapie in goats and sheep, no epidemiological evidence suggests it is zoonotic; whereas for Atypical scrapie in sheep and goats, the scientific data currently available are too limited to conclude whether it has the potential to be zoonotic or not.

For other TSEs, a number of uncertainties make it impossible at present to draw definite conclusions on possible links between animals and humans. One of the reasons for this is that data on the monitoring of TSEs in animals are too recent to be compared to the respective human data. The opinion therefore recommends that systematic monitoring of TSE diseases be continued in both humans and animals.

In addition to epidemiological data, the scientists also evaluated evidence obtained from experimental transmission of TSEs in laboratory studies. The opinion states that the results of some of these studies suggest there might be a possibility of animal-to-human transfer for other TSEs, in addition to Classical BSE in cattle. In particular, some data indicate that one of the new atypical BSE agents, the L-BSE or BASE agent, may have a similar or higher zoonotic potential than the Classical BSE agent. The opinion however points out that at present it is not possible to define how informative these laboratory studies are for measuring the transfer of TSEs between animals and humans under real exposure conditions.

This joint opinion of EFSA and ECDC provides an overview of the situation in relation to the zoonotic potential of TSEs and may support risk managers in their work on those TSEs which are of major concern for human health.

For more information.

EFSA reviews BSE/TSE infectivity in small ruminant tissues

EFSA has published a scientific opinion on Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathy (TSE) infectivity in the tissues of small ruminants such as goats and sheep. Based on new scientific evidence and taking into account the current situation with respect to the occurrence of TSEs in animals in the EU, EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) panel has reviewed the distribution of TSE infectivity in small ruminant tissues and has provided for the first time a quantification of the impact of current measures in managing TSE-related risks in small ruminants. The removal of Specified Risk Materials (SRM) such as the brain and spinal cord from animals going into the food chain protects consumers from TSE-related risks.

In this opinion, EFSA's Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) Panel reviews the latest scientific data on the infectivity of different small ruminant tissues for Classical scrapie, Atypical scrapie and BSE and takes into consideration aspects such as the age and genetic makeup of the animals. With the exception of Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE), other TSEs in animals such as scrapie have not been found to be transmissible to humans.

The Panel noted that only one single case of naturally occurring BSE has ever been identified in small ruminants worldwide. Moreover, the opinion provides a set of simulations quantifying for the first time the impact of different SRM options on reducing the risk from the possible presence of BSE in small ruminants. The Panel says that, should a BSE-infected small ruminant ever enter the food chain, the current SRM policy would allow a 10-fold reduction of the infectivity load, that is the level of TSE agent present in an infected animal. Experts also advise that the use of the dressed carcass only (excluding the head and the spinal cord) would allow a greater reduction of the BSE exposure risk than the current SRM measures.

With respect to classical scrapie, the panel concludes that, as for BSE, the current SRM policy allows a 10-fold reduction of the

infectivity load. The Panel points out that a modification of the SRM list based only on considerations for BSE will also have an impact on human exposure to Classical and Atypical scrapie agents. In addition, the Panel adds that the infectivity of goat kids below 3 months of age is negligible, even if they come from infected herds.

For Atypical scrapie in sheep and goats, the Panel says that since some infectivity, albeit at low levels, can be found in other tissues than those specified in the SRM list, it cannot be assumed that the current SRM measures will prevent the entry of the Atypical scrapie agent into the food chain.

The Panel recommends further improving data collection and risk assessment in this area of work. In particular, it recommends updating this opinion when data from ongoing experiments, such as those concerning the development of BSE in goats, become available. The Panel specifies that the development of specific assessment models could provide a more precise estimate of the impact of SRM removal policies on managing risks from TSEs.

EFSA's outlook for 2011

EFSA expects 2011 to be another busy and productive year supporting Europe's risk managers with high quality scientific advice, according to the Authority's 2011 Management Plan.

The Authority plans to deliver some 750 scientific outputs and around 100 supporting publications in 2011. Two-thirds of these now concern applications where EFSA evaluates regulated substances and products, such as pesticides, feed additives, GMOs and enzymes, as well as the assessment of health claims. EFSA will also continue to elaborate its Science Strategy, which will pull together the various strands of the Authority's scientific planning into a coherent, overarching document.

EFSA has reviewed its organisational structure and working processes to become even more efficient. This will optimise strategic planning and budgeting, establish a fully integrated performance management system, and offer a higher quality and more efficient service to applicants.

To help the Authority tackle its increasing workload, EFSA will help pool Europe's risk assessment resources more effectively by better involving Member States in its activities. For example, EFSA will outsource € 8.3m of activities to dedicated Member

State organisations to assist in data collection or other such preparatory work. The Authority will also keep Member States better informed of its medium-term plans. In addition, EFSA will continue to strengthen its relationships with the European Commission, European Parliament and Council and will consult partners and stakeholders in developing its new policy on independence and scientific decision-making processes.

Active dialogue with stakeholders, including applicants, will continue to be vital to EFSA through, for example, technical meetings and EFSA's Stakeholder Consultative Platform. Globally, the Authority will also continue to build bridges with international partners, in line with its 2009 international strategy and in liaison with the European Commission. >>>

This will help EFSA better position itself in relation to its work on emerging risks as well as grant it greater access to data and the shared development of risk assessment approaches.

The Authority will measure the effectiveness of its Strategic Plan 2009-2013 to see whether the planned actions are on track. EFSA will also be evaluated externally for the second time in 2011. The Authority will begin to use EFSA's newly-developed corporate impact indicators to gauge the extent to which its work is having an impact on Europe's legislative processes. In addition, EFSA will begin implementing a thematic approach to its communications as outlined in its Communications Strategy 2010-2013.

For more information.

Ensuring excellence in EFSA's scientific decision making

Scientific excellence and independence are two closely linked core values of EFSA. The *Policy on Declaration of Interests* (DOIs) is one of the central pillars of the multifaceted system that EFSA has put in place to safeguard its independence which incorporates organisational governance, quality review, selection of experts, collegial decision-making, rules of procedure, consultation policies and transparency in risk assessment.

The *Policy on DOIs* was first adopted by EFSA's Management Board in 2007 and, as stipulated in the policy document itself, is scheduled for review this year. In light of recent questions on EFSA's independence and, more generally, global controversies related to the science underpinning public policies, it is an opportune time for reflection.

Unlike many of its international counterparts, EFSA relies heavily on external expertise, mainly drawn from academia, research organisations and national food safety agencies, for its scientific advice; for example, more than half of its scientific panel members come from the national food safety agencies. And as the European research funding model increasingly relies on public-private partnerships, it is essential that EFSA has a robust system in place to proactively identify and manage any professional or personal conflicts of interest that might influence the objectivity of its scientific advice.

To assess the effectiveness of its independence systems, EFSA commissioned two independent reviews in 2010. The **first of these** assessed the Authority's efficiency in implementing the policy. An external consultancy analysed a sample of more than 180 DOI screenings of the 5000 that EFSA completes annually and concluded that the Authority is generally effective in implementing the policy with only minor compliance issues. EFSA also commissioned an **independent report** benchmarking its policies, structures and practices with ten peer international organisations. It found that EFSA has one of the most advanced and robust systems in place for ensuring the independence of its scientific advice.

The outcomes and recommendations of these two external reviews, together with the practical experience gained from implementing the policy and the feedback of partners and stakeholders, have helped EFSA formulate a **reflection paper** on the review of the *Policy on DOIs* which was shared with EFSA's Management Board in mid-March and later with the Scientific Committee, Advisory Forum and Stakeholder Consultative Platform. Their input will be reflected in a draft *Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision Making* which is submitted to the Management Board in June. The draft policy will integrate the existing elements of the policies, implementing procedures and systems that the Authority uses to protect its independence and will be subject to an online public consultation on EFSA's website.

The *Policy on Independence and Scientific Decision Making* will contribute to strengthening the confidence of consumers in Europe's food safety system, a key element of EFSA's mission.

For more information.

> EFSA at work

EFSA explains use of its new food consumption database

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) published in March an overview of its first Comprehensive Food Consumption Database, a new source of information on food consumption in the European Union, containing detailed data for a number of EU countries. The new database will play a key role in the evaluation of the risks related to possible hazards in food in the EU and will allow more precise estimates of consumers' exposure to such hazards, a fundamental step in EFSA's risk assessment work.

The database, which has been developed in close cooperation with EU Member States, will also be relevant in future for other fields of EFSA's work, such as the assessment of nutrient intakes of the EU population. The overview includes guidance on how summary statistics in the database can be used by food safety and public health experts both at national and EU level.

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The Comprehensive Database contains data from a total of 32 different dietary surveys from 22 Member States, including those obtained through an EFSA "Article 36" grant focused on children's food consumption data.

Summary statistics from the database enable quick screening for chronic and acute exposure to substances that may be found in the food chain. These statistics will be available to the public on the EFSA web site. In the database, dietary surveys and food consumption data for each country are divided by category; these include: age, from infants to adults aged 75 years or older; food group (nearly 160) and type of consumption, covering both regular and high consumption thus allowing calculations to be tailored to each category of consumer. The statistics on food consumption are reported in grams per day, as well as grams per day per kg of body weight.

The food consumption database will also represent a basis for instance for the work related to the assessment of nutrient intakes of the EU population. In the area of nutrition, the analysis of dietary intake data is essential to help set science-based public health targets and to assess how dietary intakes compare with recommended intake levels, as well as to monitor progress over time.

The work on this new database began in 2008, when Member States started gathering data for EFSA from national dietary surveys in their countries. While this database is useful for EFSA's risk assessment work, the data in it was derived using different methodologies, therefore making this unsuitable for direct country-to-country comparisons.

The collection of accurate, harmonised and detailed food consumption data at a European level is important for EFSA's work and in this regard, cooperation with EU Member States is considered a priority. EFSA is working with Member States to develop food consumption surveys which will allow the collection and analysis of comparable data in EU countries. This initiative is known as "What's on the Menu in Europe?" (EU MENU); several pilot studies under this initiative are due to be completed by 2012.

For more information.

EFSA reviews two publications on the safety of artificial sweeteners

In a statement published in Feburary, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) concludes that two recent publications on the safety of artificial sweeteners, namely a carcinogenicity study in mice (Soffritti et al., 2010) and an epidemiological study on the association between intakes of artificially sweetened soft drinks and increased incidence of preterm delivery (Halldorsson et al., 2010) do not give reason to reconsider previous safety assessments of aspartame or of other sweeteners currently authorised in the European Union. EFSA's review of these studies has been carried out in co-operation with the French Agency for Food, Environmental and Occupational Health & Safety, Anses.

At its plenary meeting on 1-2 March 2011, EFSA's Panel on Food Additives and Nutrient Sources added to Food (ANS) reflected on the Authority's statement and the possible need for further work in relation to these studies. EFSA will continue monitoring the scientific literature in order to identify new scientific evidence for sweeteners that may indicate a possible risk for human health or which may otherwise affect the safety assessment of these food additives.

In response to a request for technical assistance from the European Commission, EFSA reviewed the Soffritti et al. (2010) publication on a long-term carcinogenicity study in mice exposed to the artificial sweetener aspartame through feed. EFSA scientists concluded that, on the basis of the information available in the publication, the validity of the study and its statistical approach cannot be assessed and its results cannot be interpreted. Regarding the design of the study, EFSA advised that experimental studies carried out over animals' lifetimes can lead to erroneous conclusions. Older animals for instance are more susceptible to illness and when a carcinogenicity study in mice is extended beyond the recommended 104 weeks, age-related pathological changes (such as spontaneous tumours) can appear which may confound the interpretation of any compound-related effects.

EFSA noted that Swiss mice (used in this study) are known to have a high incidence of spontaneous hepatic and pulmonary tumours and that the increased incidence of these tumours reported in the study falls within the historical control range recorded in this laboratory for these tumours in these mice. Furthermore, these hepatic tumours in mice are not regarded by toxicologists as being relevant for human risk assessment when they are induced by non-genotoxic substances such as aspartame. Overall, EFSA concluded that the findings presented in Soffritti et al. (2010) do not provide sufficient scientific evidence to reconsider the previous evaluations by EFSA on aspartame that concluded on the lack of genotoxicity and carcinogenicity of aspartame.

EFSA also assessed the Halldorsson et al. (2010) publication that reports findings suggesting that the daily intake of artificially sweetened soft drinks may be associated with an increased risk of preterm delivery. EFSA concluded that there is no evidence available in this study to support a causal relationship between the consumption of artificially sweetened soft drinks and preterm delivery and that additional studies would be required either to confirm or reject such an association, as indicated by the authors. Given that the association found by the authors appears to be primarily related to medically induced (rather than spontaneous) preterm deliveries, EFSA stressed that medical history and criteria on which medical decisions to induce delivery were based are factors which should be investigated further. EFSA recommended that future studies should also investigate other important confounding factors such as exposure to other substances in the diet which might have an effect on pregnancy.

For more information.

EFSA revises assessment of consumer exposure to steviol glycosides

EFSA has reviewed its previous assessment of consumer exposure to the sweeteners steviol glycosides based on the revised levels of use proposed by the applicants. More commonly referred to as stevia, these sweeteners are proposed for use in sugar-free or reduced energy foods such as certain flavoured drinks and confectionary. Although the revised exposure estimates are slightly lower than those in the opinion adopted by EFSA's ANS Panel in April 2010, adults and children who are high consumers of foods containing these sweeteners could still exceed the Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) established by the Panel if the sweeteners are used at maximum levels.

In April 2010, EFSA's evaluation of the safety and consumer exposure indicated that some adults and children could exceed the ADI of 4 mg per kg body weight per day (mg/kg bw/day) if the sweeteners were used at the maximum use levels proposed by the applicants. The European Commission therefore asked industry to revise the uses proposed for the substances. In order to ensure that the use of such sweeteners would be safe for consumers, the European Commission subsequently requested that EFSA carry out a new exposure assessment on the basis of the revised uses proposed.

Taking into account the revised proposed uses and use levels submitted by industry, EFSA calculated the exposure to steviol glycosides from various food categories including non-alcoholic flavoured drinks which, given food consumption habits, would be among the main sources of exposure to steviol glycosides for both adults and children. In estimating the exposure, EFSA used data from several food consumption databases, including EFSA's Comprehensive Food Consumption Database.

For high consumers, revised exposure estimates to steviol glycosides remain above the established ADI of 4 mg per kg body weight. For European children (aged 1-14) exposure ranges from 1.7 to 16.3 mg/kg bw/day; and for adults, revised exposure estimates range from 5.6 to 6.8 mg/kg bw/day.

The revised estimates were published in January 2011.

For more information.

How prepared is EFSA for urgent requests for scientific advice?

In January EFSA published its annual report on how prepared it was in 2009 for crises. The report looks at three elements of the Authority's crisis preparedness: the Emergency Manual, the emergency training activities that it carried out in 2009 and its emergency response assessment. The report also describes how EFSA responded to requests for urgent advice in 2009.

EFSA needs to be able to respond quickly and efficiently to provide scientific and technical support to inform Europe's risk managers and consumers on "hot issues" and to communicate about its findings. For this, EFSA aims to be fully prepared for requests for urgent advice.

In 2009, EFSA further developed its in-house procedures for use within the Authority and by its staff in case of an urgent request for scientific advice. It introduced two additional activity levels for responding to urgent requests for advice, explaining in detail the response teams' roles and responsibilities. EFSA also established additional tools that will help respond to urgent requests for scientific advice, such as a functional mailbox for storing all relevant incoming and outgoing emails.

Also in 2009, EFSA conducted one in-house training and one crisis simulation exercise with Member States and the Commission. The exercises demonstrated that EFSA has a mature understanding of urgent advice planning and preparedness, and is well prepared for grasping the scientific problem at hand and for dealing with it in a systematic way. It was also evident from the exercises that EFSA has a good and trusting working relationship with the Commission, the Advisory Forum, where Member States are represented, and its Advisory Forum's Communications Working Group, and the respective roles are clearly understood. However, the exercises also revealed that improvement would be beneficial in internal information management and record keeping during the response to requests for urgent scientific advice by further developing the procedures and training EFSA staff on these issues.

Last but not least, during 2009, EFSA received two urgent requests for scientific advice, one concerning the presence of packaging ink in breakfast cereals and another one on nicotine in wild mushrooms. In both cases, the Authority was able to turn the advice around quickly, achieve consistent news coverage of its messages and avoid the generation of undue public concern.

For more information

Risk of *Salmonella* contamination of chicken carcasses varies across EU

In January, EFSA published an evaluation of factors associated with *Salmonella* contamination of chicken carcasses. The report, based on data from an EU-wide baseline survey, shows that the risk for contamination depends on slaughter processes and varies significantly across countries and between slaughterhouses within a country, even when other associated factors are accounted for.

In the *Salmonella* survey 10,035 carcasses were sampled from 561 slaughterhouses in 26 European Union Member States as well as Norway and Switzerland.

Analysis of the survey results showed that the risk for *Salmonella*-contaminated carcasses was higher with bigger slaughter capacity of the slaughterhouse and with processing at a later time of the day.

The *Salmonella* serovar distribution varied among Member States. The most commonly reported serovars were S. Infantis, *S.* Enteritidis and *S.* Typhimurium. No specific serovar was predominant in all countries surveyed. Many of the reported serovars seem to have become well-established in the production of chicken carcasses.

For more information.

Sensitivity of BSE monitoring under scrutiny

The number of Classical BSE cases detected in cattle in the European Union has constantly declined in recent years. As a consequence, the BSE monitoring regime implemented in EU Member States is regularly evaluated, with a view to possible relaxation of related measures. Currently, BSE testing in the EU is mandatory for healthy slaughtered cattle above the age of 30 months, and for animals from particular risk groups from 24 months of age. For a group of 17 Member States, fulfilling certain criteria and following advice from EFSA, derogation has been granted for testing only cattle aged above 48 months.

In this context, EFSA's Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ) has recently published an updated assessment of risks related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in some EU Member States. This follows previous opinions issued by the Panel in 2008 and 2009. The current update extends the assessment to all 25 Member States that joined the EU by 2004 and have therefore implemented EU legislation related to BSE for at least 6 years, making them eligible for a revision of their BSE monitoring programmes according to criteria from the European Commission.

The opinion evaluates both the age of animals detected with BSE in each year up to 2009 and the number of BSE cases in animal cohorts born in different years. In order to forecast the effects of easing the criteria for BSE testing in cattle, the BIOHAZ Panel assessed through modellisation how many Classical BSE cases could be expected to be missed under a "worst case" and a "more realistic" scenario. The results of the model show that the likelihood of detecting new cases is very low, but a small probability of detecting cases of Classical BSE remains in some age groups. This conclusion about the epidemiological situation is valid for 22 of the 25 Member States assessed, which means that a similar testing regime could be applied to all of them, apart from the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia. For these 3 countries, the preliminary analyses of the data showed inconclusive results and the model could not be applied. The European Commission has already asked EFSA to update its assessment for these countries based on additional BSE surveillance data. This update has been produced in the first half of 2011.

In general, the BIOHAZ Panel recommended to comprehensively reassess the sensitivity of the present or intended new EU surveillance system for detecting the re-emergence of Classical BSE, the prevalence of Atypical BSE or the emergence of a novel TSE in cattle. If BSE testing of healthy slaughtered cattle was to be reduced or stopped, the Panel further recommended that attention should be paid to making sure that animals belonging to increased BSE risk groups do not enter the non-tested animal populations.

For more information.

> Working together

EFSA and ECDC issue 2009 report on zoonoses and foodborne outbreaks in the EU

In March, EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their Annual Report on Zoonoses and Food-borne outbreaks for 2009, 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 *Salmonella*, one of the most reported zoonotic infections was 17% lower in 2009 than in 2008 (108,614 cases compared to 131,468 cases), reflecting a decreasing trend in the EU over the past five years. The report says that the reduction targets set by the European Commission to reduce the spread of *Salmonella* in poultry, eggs and chicken meat are likely to be the main reasons for the reduction in the number of human cases. However, *Campylobacter* and *Listeria* registered increases (up 4% to 198,252 cases and >>>

up 19% to 1,645 cases respectively). The report, which covers 14 zoonotic infections, also provides data on other zoonoses, such as brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis and rabies, and trichinellosis and echinococcosis, two parasitic zoonoses.

The report also gives an overview of food-borne outbreaks in 2009: 5,550 were recorded, affecting nearly 49,000 people and causing 46 deaths. Most of the outbreaks were caused by *Salmonella* (31%) followed by viruses (18%) and bacterial toxins (10%). The most frequent food sources of these outbreaks were eggs and egg products, mixed and buffet meals, and pork and derived products.

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

For more information.

Stakeholder workshop on non-plastic food contact materials

The workshop on risk assessment issues related to non-plastic food contact materials and attended by industry and consumer groups took place in Milan (Italy) from 9 to 10 of March 2011.

This workshop was an important step before the finalisation of a report by the EFSA scientific cooperation working group on non-plastic food contact materials that is expected to be published in 2011.

Participants were invited to comment on:

- the progress of the work;
- the compilation of evaluations of substances;
- the principles for prioritisation of evaluations.

They also had the opportunity to present their own approaches for risk assessment in view of future actions to be taken in this area.

Representatives of industry organisations representing the producers of different non-plastic food contact materials (coatings, printing inks, paper and board, rubber, silicones, adhesives, ion-exchange resins, wood, cork), as well as food industries participated in the workshop.

The working group on non-plastic food contact materials of EFSA's panel on Food contact materials, enzymes, flavourings and processing aids (CEF) was set up in February 2010 to help prevent crises in which urgent advice was needed on safety of foodstuffs in direct or indirect contact with these non-plastic materials. Since such crises are mainly due to the lack of harmonised risk assessment approaches and specific EU legislation, the tasks of this Working Group were to:

- collect and analyse information available in the EU Member States, on the safety of substances used in manufacturing of non-plastic materials for contact with foodstuffs;
- establish the principles for setting priorities for further evaluations;
- suggest further actions to be taken.

EFSA and industry exchange views on guidance on gut and immune function health claims

Nearly 200 representatives from the food and drink industry, academia, Member States and the European Commission, attended a meeting in Amsterdam in December 2010 to discuss with EFSA experts the scientific requirements for health claims related to gut and immune function. The meeting addressed and provided further clarification to two main questions: which claimed effects are considered beneficial for human health; and which studies or outcome measures are appropriate for the substantiation of health claims. The meeting was also watched live by more than 2,500 viewers.

In the area of gut and immune health claims, the meeting offered EFSA experts the opportunity to further explain the general approach used in the assessment of the claims and provide clarifications on issues raised during the consultation and at the meeting. The discussions also showed there were many commonly held views, both amongst participants and EFSA experts, for instance on how to substantiate health benefits related to gut function, such as regularity, and defence against gut infections. In other areas such as claims related to immunity and claims on health effects of gut bacteria, the >>>

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meeting was a good opportunity to exchange views on how to demonstrate the health benefit.

Concluding the meeting, Professor Albert Flynn, Chair of EFSA's Panel dealing with Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) said: "Today, we heard in detail the challenges applicants face when preparing applications for health claims. This meeting has been very helpful for us in developing more detailed guidance."

In her closing remarks, Dr Juliane Kleiner, Co-ordinator of EFSA's NDA Unit said that EFSA would update its guidance on the scientific requirements for health claims related to gut and immune functions early in 2011, taking into consideration the discussions at the Amsterdam meeting and all comments received during the on-line consultation launched in September 2010 in preparation for the meeting. A full report of the meeting will also be published on EFSA's website in the coming months.

This meeting, and the on-line consultation, are part of EFSA's commitment to pursue dialogue with stakeholders to further explain how it carries out its work and to provide applicants with additional guidance on the preparation of health claims applications in selected areas. In the first months of 2011, EFSA is organising three more consultations on health claims related to:

- Appetite ratings, weight management and blood glucose concentrations;
- Protection against oxidative damage, cardiovascular health and
- Bone, joint connective tissue and oral health.

For more information.

> Publications

EFSA's 2011 Work Plan

EFSA has published its 2011 Work Plan outlining its activities over the year. It predicts that 2011 will again be a busy and productive year, resulting in some 900 scientific outputs and supporting publications. Two-thirds of these will involve the evaluation of regulated substances, an area to which EFSA is devoting more and more of its resources.

In 2011, EFSA will review its organisational structure and working processes. This will enable it to: optimise strategic planning and budgeting; establish a fully integrated performance management system; and offer a higher quality and more efficient service to applicants.

EFSA will help pool Europe's risk assessment resources more effectively by better involving Member States. It will continue to strengthen its relationships with the European Commission, European Parliament and Council and further engage in active dialogue with stakeholders.

In addition, EFSA will develop its science strategy and implement the actions resulting from its Communications Strategy 2010-2013. The overarching approach will be more thematic, demonstrating and illustrating the impact of EFSA's work.

For more information.

The challenge of describing food: scientific colloquium report available

The latest in EFSA's series of scientific colloquium reports has been published. It reports on discussions held among European and international experts on key issues related to the development of a harmonised food description and classification system.

EFSA scientists organised the colloquium to have an open scientific debate on the requirements of such a food description and classification system and to build on experiences gained from the development of existing systems. Consideration was given to different approaches to classify foods and the diversity of needs for the various areas of food safety.

EFSA has a role in promoting and co-ordinating the development of harmonised risk assessment methodologies. Exposure assessment is a crucial and integral part of risk assessment and the quality of available data both on food consumption and on occurrence levels may have a major impact on the outcome of risk assessment.

Implementation of a common food description and classification system would improve the consistency and reliability of exposure assessment carried out by EFSA and its various panels and by other experts in Europe.

For more information.

A compilation of EFSA scientific outputs from 2010

EFSA has compiled the scientific outputs from its Scientific Committee, Panels and units from 2010 into one easy-to-use portable DVD.

Users can quickly and simply browse the DVD contents to find the documents they want. These can be opinions, guidance, statements, pesticide conclusions or reasoned opinions, or scientific and technical reports of EFSA. The outputs are also divided by Scientific Committee, Panel or unit for ease of use.

For more information.

> Calls

Call for scientific data on opium alkaloids in poppy seeds

EFSA launched a call for scientific data on opium alkaloid levels in poppy seeds in food and drink. Such data will help EFSA estimate to what extent Europeans are exposed to these substances. This will allow the Authority to then assess the human health risks.

Opium alkaloids are a group of chemical compounds naturally occurring in opium poppies, a traditional medicinal plant. They are extracted from opium, the dried milky substance coming from the immature seed pods of the plant. Morphine and codeine are two well-known examples of opium alkaloids.

The seeds of the opium poppy are used in food, in baked goods, as an ingredient in composite dishes or sprinkled on top of food. Poppy seeds are also used to prepare hot drinks. Due to their high oil content, edible oil is also produced from the seeds.

Although alkaloids in poppy seeds occur naturally in very small amounts, studies on alkaloids in edible poppy seeds have revealed that the levels vary markedly and have increased in recent years. Types of poppy, contamination from the milky substance during harvest and geographical origin could all influence the level found in poppy seeds.

Eating food that contains alkaloid poppy seeds could have adverse human health effects such as impaired consciousness, and respiratory or cardiovascular problems. Therefore, the European Commission asked EFSA to assess the need for regulatory measures for opium alkaloids in food. This led to the call for data on a range of different alkaloids, which has since closed.

For more information.

Reporting on EFSA's call for data on perfluoroalkylated substances in food

EFSA has produced a report on its interim findings following its call for data on perfluoroalkylated substances. The call followed a Commission recommendation to Member States to monitor the presence of these substances in food. The recommendation follows a 2008 opinion from EFSA's Scientific Panel on contaminants in the food chain on some perfluoroalkylated substances.

Perfluoroalkylated substances are widely used in industrial and consumer applications - stain-resistant coatings for fabrics, oil-resistant coatings for paper products approved for food, fire fighting foams, floor polishes and insecticide formulations. They have been widely found in the environment, fish, birds and mammals.

In the 2008 scientific opinion, EFSA recommended collecting further data on levels of these substances in food and human exposure to them, particularly with respect to monitoring exposure trends. The data was analysed and summarised by EFSA in an intermediate report published in February 2011. Based on data from seven Member States from 2000 - 2009, the report revealed that the highest levels of perfluoroalkylated substances are found in game, fish and seafood.

A final report incorporating data received up to January 2012 will be ready by May 2012.

For more information.

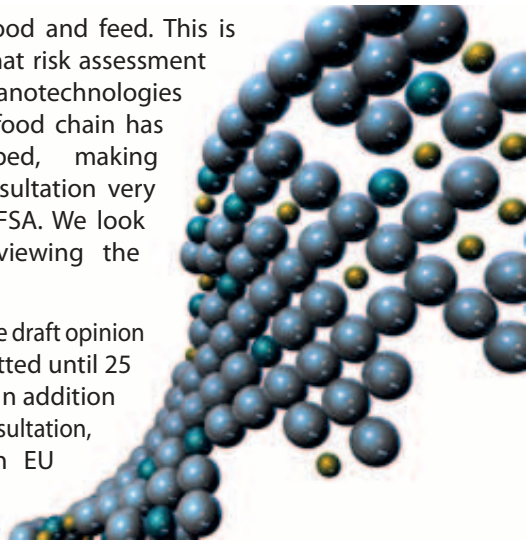
EFSA launches public consultation on guidance for the risk assessment of nanomaterials in food and feed

The European Food Safety Authority launched a public consultation on its draft guidance document for engineered nanomaterial (ENM) applications in food and feed in January 2011.

The guidance document, prepared by the Scientific Committee in response to a request from the European Commission, outlines that in this evolving area of science, it remains essential to adequately characterise the ENM following classical risk assessment practices: hazard identification and hazard characterisation followed by exposure assessment and risk characterisation. The EFSA guidance sets out for applicants, the data needed to understand the specific properties of the ENM, allowing a risk assessment to be carried out.

The draft guidance also recognises several uncertainties related to test methodologies and the availability of data and makes recommendations about how risk assessments should reflect such uncertainties.

Commenting on the launch of the public consultation, Professor Vittorio Silano, Chair of EFSA's Scientific Committee explained, "Building on EFSA's previous scientific opinions in the area of nanotechnologies, we are now in the position to provide practical guidance on the risk assessment process. EFSA recognises the importance of developing risk assessment methodologies in this area of science, supporting innovation whilst ensuring the safety of food and feed. This is the first time that risk assessment guidance on nanotechnologies related to the food chain has been developed, making this public consultation very important to EFSA. We look forward to reviewing the contributions."



Comments on the draft opinion could be submitted until 25 February 2011. In addition to the public consultation, EFSA met with EU Member State representatives to discuss the draft guidance document.

The final guidance document has since been adopted and published by EFSA's Scientific Committee, which took the comments received through the public consultation into consideration.

For more information.

EFSA seeks views on its updated guidance for assessing the risks of GMMs

EFSA's Panel on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) launched a public consultation on its updated guidance for assessing the risks of Genetically Modified Micro-Organisms (GMMs), and their food and feed products.

The update is aimed at those who are required by law to prepare and present applications involving genetically modified micro-organisms and their food and feed products that they would like to bring to market. The guidance covers products that consist of, contain, or are derived from, genetically modified micro-organisms. Substances such as additives, vitamins and enzymes produced with genetically modified micro-organisms are also covered.

The guidance which was sent for public consultation is an update of the previous guidance from 2006. It describes the steps to be taken and the issues to be considered when carrying out a comprehensive risk characterisation. The guidance clarifies some issues and goes into greater depth in others, based on experience gained and input received since the 2006 document was made available. The consultation has since closed.

For more information.

> Scientific contracts and grants

External reports published

Development of harmonised survey methods for food-borne pathogens in foodstuffs in the European Union
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/83e.htm

Statistical modelling of usual intake
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/86e.htm

Customization of MedISys for the monitoring of food and feed hazards
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/supporting/pub/140e.htm

> Mandates accepted

Mandates accepted: January-April 2011

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

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

Support to NDA draft opinion on Art. 13(1) health claims related to *Bifidobacterium longum* BB536 and resistance to cedar pollen allergens (ID 3006)
Deadline: **01-Feb-11** Mandate number: **M-2008-1061**

Support to the NDA draft opinion on the substantiation of a health claim related to *Lactobacillus GG* and "defence against intestinal pathogens" pursuant to Article 13(5) of Regulation (EC) No 1924/2006
Deadline: **31-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0327**

Request for a scientific opinion and technical assistance on the public health hazards to be covered by inspection of meat-SWINE
Deadline: **30-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0232**

Request for scientific and technical assistance from EFSA in relation to the (i) potential association of artificially sweetened soft drinks with an increased risk of preterm delivery; (ii) Potential carcinogenicity of Aspartame
Deadline: **21-Feb-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0024**

4080 - Melatonin (including from plant sources e.g. Graminaceae, such as Festuca arundinacea) - Sleep patterns
Deadline: **30-Jun-11** Mandate number: **M-2008-1061**

The use of raw moments compared to Monte Carlo simulation approach in a QMRA model on *Campylobacter* in broiler meat
Deadline: **10-Mar-11** Mandate number: **M-2008-0452**

Support to NDA opinion on dietary reference values for protein intake
Deadline: **31-Mar-12** Mandate number: **M-2005-0015**

Food Additives & Nutrient Sources (ANS)

Statement on two recent scientific articles on the safety of artificial sweeteners
Deadline: **28-Feb-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0028**

Request for scientific and technical assistance from EFSA in relation to the (i) potential association of artificially sweetened soft drinks with an increased risk of preterm delivery; (ii) Potential carcinogenicity of Aspartame
Deadline: **08-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0024**

Request for an evaluation on a revised exposure assessment of Southampton colours provided by Unesda
Deadline: **31-Mar-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0007**

Request for an evaluation of a new study related to the bioavailability of aluminium in food
Deadline: **30-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0011**

Mandate proposed to EFSA by the ANS Panel for a self-tasking safety assessment as a food additive of lutein preparations other than lutein with high concentrations of total saponified carotenoids at levels of at least 80 %
Deadline: **30-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0525**

Request for EFSA to provide a scientific opinion, based on its consideration of the safety and bioavailability of chromium (III) lactate trihydrate as a source of chromium (III) added for nutritional purposes to foodstuffs
Deadline: **31-Dec-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0012**

Request for EFSA to provide a scientific opinion, based on its consideration of the safety and bioavailability of iodized ethyl esters of poppy seed oil as a source of iodine added for nutritional purposes to foodstuffs
Deadline: **Additional data request** Mandate number: **M-2011-0012**

Request for self-task mandate on the Soffritti et al. 2010 and Halldorson et al. 2010 publications
Deadline: **31-Dec-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0079**

Request for a revised exposure assessment of ethyl lauroyl arginate as a food additive
Deadline: **31-Dec-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0289**

Request for EFSA to revise the scientific risk assessment on a food additive: Calcium lignosulfonate (40-65) after the submission of additional information
Deadline: **30-Nov-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0093**

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Scientific Opinion on a summary of scientific studies undertaken by the UK Food Standards Agency to support a proposed production method for smoked 'skin-on' sheep meat
Deadline: **30-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0413**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the BIOHAZ and CEF Units for the preparation of an EFSA statement summarising the conclusions and recommendations from the two opinions on irradiation of food adopted by the BIOHAZ and CEF Panels
Deadline: **31-Mar-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0005**

Request for a scientific opinion concerning hatchery waste as animal by-products
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0524**

Self-tasking mandate for a scientific opinion on the maintenance of the list of QPS recommended biological agents intentionally added to food or feed as notified to EFSA (2011 update)
Deadline: **31-Dec-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0030**

Assessment of epidemiological data in relation to the health hazards with regard to the presence of parasites in wild caught fish from certain fishing grounds in the Baltic Sea
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0003**

EFSA approaches to risk assessment in the area of antimicrobial resistance, with an emphasis in commensal microorganisms
Deadline: **30-Jun-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0032**

Evaluation of the efficacy of lactic acid for the removal of microbial surface contamination of beef carcases, cuts and trimmings
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0010**

Request to reassess the BSE epidemiological situtation as regards to Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. Opinion on a second update on the risk for human and animal health related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in some Member States.
Mandate number: **M-2011-0055**

Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings (CEF)

Recycling processes
Deadline: **30-Sep-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0527**
Deadline: **01-Oct-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0397, M-2011-0052**
Deadline: **20-Oct-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0236, M-2010-0273**
Deadline: **31-Dec-13** Mandate number: **M-2009-0172, M-2009-0210, M-2010-0004, M-2010-0017, M-2010-0070, M-2010-0074**
Mandate number: **M-2009-0261**

Re-evaluation Zesti smoke Code 10
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0503**

80350 - poly(12-hydroxystearic acid)-polyethyleneimine copolymer (extension of application)
Deadline: **05-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0436**

Mandates accepted

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the BIOHAZ and CEF Units for the preparation of an EFSA statement summarising the conclusions and recommendations from the two opinions on irradiation of food adopted by the BIOHAZ and CEF Panels
Deadline: **31-Mar-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0005**

71955 - Perfluoro[(2-ethyloxy-ethoxy)acetic acid], ammonium salt
Deadline: **03-Aug-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0213**

[4-(2-methylbutan-2-yl)phenyl]x [2,4-bis(2-methylbutan-2-yl)phenyl]3-x phosphite (x = 0, 1, 2, 3)
Deadline: **10-Aug-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0172**

49840 - Dioctadecyl disulfide
Deadline: **22-Nov-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0033**

65841-Polyaddition product of glycidyl methacrylate with acrylic acid and/or methacrylic acid, esters with alcohols (C1-C4) aliphatic, monohydroxy, saturated
Deadline: **Additional data request** Mandate number: **M-2006-0160**

Evaluation of the efficacy of lactic acid for the removal of microbial surface contamination of beef carcases, cuts and trimmings
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0010**

15180 - 3,4-diacetoxy-1-butene
Deadline: **20-Oct-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0364**

Request for a re-evaluation of the smoke flavouring primary product - Fumokomp
Deadline: **31-Jul-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0018**

Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM)

Request for a scientific opinion on summary of scientific studies undertaken by the UK Food Standards Agency to support a proposed production method for the smoked 'skin-on' sheep meat
Deadline: **31-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0413**

Procurement on toxicokinetics, toxicity and allergenicity data on substances to be evaluated as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils
Deadline: **01-May-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0039**

Procurement on the reactivity of substances in contact with edible fats and oils, to be evaluated as acceptable previous cargoes for edible fats and oils
Mandate number: **M-2011-0038**

Request for an EFSA opinion on the methodological principles and scientific methods to be taken into account when establishing reference points for action
Deadline: **30-Jun-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0060**

Data Collection & Exposure (DATEX)

Revised exposure assessment on steviol glycosides
Mandate number: **M-2010-0414**

Dietary exposure assessment of smoke flavourings primary products Zesti Smoke Code 10
Deadline: **06-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0503**

Dietary exposure assessment of smoke flavourings Fumokomp
Deadline: **06-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0018**

Exposure assessment to N-acetyl-aspartate
Deadline: **15-Mar-11** Mandate number: **M-2007-0072**

Revision on food contact material guidelines – exposure model
Deadline: **28-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0037**

Request for an EFSA opinion on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of Alternaria toxins in feed and food. (This assistance on exposure is to complement the previuos assistance in occurrence of Alternaria toxins EFSA-Q-2011-00115)
Deadline: **31-Oct-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0280**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the DATEX Unit for a call for proposals on "Dietary monitoring tools for risk assessment"
Deadline: **30-Jun-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0137**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the DATEX Unit for a call for proposals on "Electronic Transmission of Chemical Occurrence Data"
Deadline: **31-Jan-13** Mandate number: **M-2011-0136**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the DATEX Unit for a series of collaboration agreements for the "Update of the EFSA Comprehensive European Food Consumption Database"
Deadline: **31-Dec-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0156**

Emerging Risks (EMRISK)

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the Emerging Risks Unit for a chemical hazards database
Deadline: **31-Dec-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0015**

Internal mandate proposed by the EFSA to the Emerging Risks Unit for establishing an Emerging Risks Exchange Network
Deadline: **31-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0180**

Internal mandate proposed by EFSA to the Emerging Risks Unit for a procurement on data collection for the consumption of energy drinks and specific ingredients in specific consumer groups
Deadline: **31-Jul-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0143**

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:
3 Article 14 applications For more information.
5 Article 13.5 applications For more information.
4 requests for scientific assistance on comments related to applications

Request to the European Food safety authority for a scientific opinion on goat's milk protein source for infant formulae and follow-on formulae
Deadline: **31-Mar-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0049**

General guidance for stakeholders on the evaluation of Article 13.1, 13.5 and 14 health claims
Deadline: **30-Jun-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0099**

Scientific and technical guidance for the preparation and presentation of the application for authorisation of a health claim
Deadline: **30-Jun-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0098**

Request for an EFSA opinion on an application submitted pursuant to Article 6 paragraph 11 of Directive 2000/13/EC: labelling exemption for ovalbumin / egg white used in the manufacture of wine
Deadline: **30-Sep-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0323**

Outcome of the Public consultation on the Draft guidance on Scientific requirements for health claims related to bone, joints, connective tissue and oral health
Deadline: **31-Jul-12** Mandate number: **M-2010-0407**

Outcome of the Public consultation on the Draft guidance on Scientific requirements for health claims related to appetite ratings/bodyweight/blood glucose health
Deadline: **31-Jul-12** Mandate number: **M-2010-0407**

Outcome of the Public consultation on the Draft guidance on Scientific requirements for health claims related to antioxidants, oxidative damage and cardiovascular health
Deadline: **31-Jul-12** Mandate number: **M-2010-0407**

Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum (SC&AF)

Public consultation on: Guidance on risk assessment concerning potential risks arising from applications of nanoscience and nanotechnologies to food and feed
Deadline: **06-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2009-0316**

Public consultation on: draft opinion Genotoxicity Testing Strategies
Deadline: **30-Sep-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0140**

Zoonoses (Data collection)

Assistance to AHAW panel on Arthropod vector distribution data collections
Deadline: **30-Jun-11** Mandate number: **M-2009-0124**

Revision of zoonoses web reporting application for 2011 and 2012 and running the zoonoses support helpdesk
Mandate number: **M-2011-0043**

Request for scientific assistance on data validation and analysis related to the EU coordinated monitoring programme on the prevalence of Listeria monocytogenes in certain ready-to-eat foods - report A
Deadline: **31-Jan-13** Mandate number: **M-2011-0054**

Request for scientific assistance on data validation and analysis related to the EU coordinated monitoring programme on the prevalence of Listeria monocytogenes in certain ready-to-eat foods - report B
Deadline: **31-Dec-13** Mandate number: **M-2011-0054**

Revision of the manuals to guide the reporting of zoonoses, zoonotic agents, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks in the EU for the data from the year 2010
Deadline: **30-Apr-11** Mandate number: **M-2011-0064**

Working Group on use of XML and Excel files for the provision of aggregated and sample-based data to the Zoonoses system
Deadline: **31-Jan-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0067**

Bluetongue monitoring and surveillance – advising on expected prevalence and geographical unit for different epidemiological situations
Deadline: **31-May-11** Mandate number: **M-2010-0432**

Internal mandate proposed by EFSA to the Unit on Zoonoses Data Collection for issuing a European Union Summary Report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic agents in 2010
Deadline: **28-Feb-12** Mandate number: **M-2011-0148**

> Opinions and other outputs adopted

Opinions and other outputs adopted: January-April 2011

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

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

JECFA opinion on cadmium
Adopted on: **07-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01135**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2006.htm

Food Additives & Nutrient Sources (ANS)

Request for a revised exposure assessment of steviol glycosides as a food additive
Adopted on: **13-Jan-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01214**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1972.htm

Re-evaluation of food colours
Adopted on: **03-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-240, EFSA-Q-2008-239, EFSA-Q-2008-238, EFSA-Q-2008-237**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2004.htm

Statement on two recent scientific articles on the safety of artificial sweeteners
Adopted on: **03-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00068**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1996.htm

Request for scientific and technical assistance from EFSA in relation to the (i) potential association of artificially sweetened soft drinks with an increased risk of preterm delivery; (ii) Potential carcinogenicity of Aspartame
Adopted on: **25-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00064**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2089.htm

Request for EFSA to perform a scientific risk assessment on food additive: glycerol esters of tall oil rosin
Adopted on: **12-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00880**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2141.htm

Mandate proposed to EFSA by the ANS Panel for a self-tasking safety assessment as a food additive of lutein preparations other than lutein with high concentrations of total saponified carotenoids at levels of at least 80 %.
Adopted on: **13-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01491**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2144.htm

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Request for an opinion on the capacity of oleochemical processes to inactivate possible risks linked to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies in animal by-products not intended for human consumption

Adopted on: **20-Jan-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00969**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1976.htm

Review of the BSE-related risk in bovine intestines

Adopted on: **10-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01094**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2104.htm

Campylobacter in broiler meat production: control options and performance objectives and/or targets at different stages of the food chain

Adopted on: **10-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00233**

Quantitative estimation of the public health impact of setting a new target for the reduction of *Salmonella* in broilers

Adopted on: **10-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2008-293**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the BIOHAZ and CEF Units for the preparation of an EFSA statement summarising the conclusions and recommendations from the two opinions on irradiation of food adopted by the BIOHAZ and CEF Panels

Adopted on: **29-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00015**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2107.htm

Request to reassess the BSE epidemiological situtation as regards to Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. Opinion on a second update on the risk for human and animal health related to the revision of the BSE monitoring regime in some Members States

Adopted on: **13-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00138**

Food Contact Materials, Enzymes, Flavourings (CEF)

List Representative Substances for toxicity Testing "Footnote 10 substances"

Adopted on: **02-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01492**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1985.htm

47060 - Request for evaluation of Additive Benzenepropanoic acid, 3,-bis(1,1-dimethylethyl)-4-hydroxy-, C13-15 branched abd linear alkyl esters (Anox 1315) CAS NR 171090-93-0 for food contact applications

Adopted on: **03-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00934**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1998.htm

93460 - titanium dioxide, reacted with octyltriethoxysilane

Adopted on: **03-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00917**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2003.htm

Trilobatin

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00567**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1065.htm

25885 - Trimethyl trimellitate

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00838**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1997.htm

86437 - Silver Zeolite A (Silver zinc sodium ammonium alumino silicate)

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00708**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1999.htm

22931-(perfluorobutyl)ethylene (PFBE)

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01039**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2000.htm

38885-2,4-Bis(2,4-dimethylphenyl)-6-(2-hydroxy-4-n-octyloxyphenyl)-1,3,5-triazine

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00768**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2001.htm

15260-1,10-Diaminodecan

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00674**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2002.htm

Opinions and other outputs adopted

FGE.209 - Genotoxicity of 2,6,6-trimethylcyclohexa-1,3-diene-1-carbaldehyde [FL-no: 05.104] from FGE.19 subgroup 2.3 (only one substance)

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01249**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1992.htm

FGE.211: Consideration of genotoxicity data on four alpha,beta-unsaturated aldehydes from chemical subgroup 2.5 of FGE.19

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01250**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1993.htm

FGE.303: Splianthol

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01502**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1995.htm

FGE.308: Sucrose octaacetate (FL 16.081)

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01505**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2014.htm

FGE.308: Glucose pentacetate (FL 09.258)

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01504**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2014.htm

FGE.08rev3: Fl-no: 16.114

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00040**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1988.htm

FGE.08rev3: Fl-no: 15.134

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00039**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1988.htm

FGE.08rev3 Aliphatic and alicyclic mono-, di-, tri-, and polysulphides with or without additional oxygenated functional groups

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00038**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1988.htm

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

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00577**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1988.htm

2,5 Dihydroxy-1,4-Dithiane

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00576**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1988.htm

FGE.22rev1 Phenol derivatives containing ring-alkyl, ring-alkoxy, and side-chains with an oxygenated functional group from chemical group 25

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00045**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

Nibovan [FL-no:09.134]

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00575**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

Dihydrogalangal acetate [FL-no:09.946]

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00574**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

Guaiacol Isobutyrate [FL-no:09.945]

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00573**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

Guaiacol Butyrate [FL-no:09.944]

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00572**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

Guaiacol propionate [FL-no:09.943]

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00569**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1990.htm

FGE.30rev1: Hydroxypropenylbenzenes

Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00050**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1991.htm

FGE.48 Rev.1: Re-evaluation of 2-aminoacetophenone
Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01100**

FGE.21rev2 Thiazoles, thiophene, thiazoline and thienyl derivatives
Adopted on: **04-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00042**

Consideration of genotoxicity data on representatives for 70 alpha,beta-unsaturated aldehydes and precursors for such from chemical subgroup 1.1.1 of FGE.19
Adopted on: **21-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01247**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2086.htm

40560-butadiene, styrene, methyl methacrylate) copolymer
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00807**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2122.htm

40563 (Butadiene – styrene – methyl methacrylate – butyl acrylate) copolymer
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00805**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2123.htm

66765-(methyl methacrylate, butyl acrylate, styrene, glycidyl methacrylate) copolymer copolymer
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00806**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2124.htm

80350 - poly(12-hydroxystearic acid)-polyethyleneimine copolymer (extension of application)
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01244**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2125.htm

93360 - Thiodipropionic acid, ditetradecyl ester, submitted by Sumilizer TPM
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00935**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2126.htm

FGE.59 Rev1 - Consideration of aliphatic and aromatic ethers evaluated by JECFA
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00051**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2158.htm

FGE.309: Sodium Diacetate
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00234**

FGE.10Rev2: Aliphatic primary and secondary saturated and unsaturated alcohols, aldehydes, acetals, carboxylic acids and esters containing an additional oxygenated functional group and lactones
Adopted on: **24-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00128**

Internal Mandate proposed by EFSA to the BIOHAZ and CEF Units for the preparation of an EFSA statement summarising the conclusions and recommendations from the two opinions on irradiation of food adopted by the BIOHAZ and CEF Panels
Adopted on: **29-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00026**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2107.htm

Contaminants in the Food Chain (CONTAM)

Tolerable weekly intake for cadmium
Adopted on: **18-Jan-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01008**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1975.htm

Request for an update on the scientific opinion related to endosulfan as undesirable substance in feed
Adopted on: **22-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00968**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2131.htm

Data Collection & Exposure (DATEX)

Request for an EFSA report on monitoring data regarding perfluoroalkylated substances in food
Adopted on: **09-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00788**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2016.htm

Guideline document on the use of the comprehensive database for exposure assessment
Adopted on: **24-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01471**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2097.htm

Update on the request for an EFSA report on acrylamide monitoring data
Adopted on: **22-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01458**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2133.htm

TM-AK-11-009-EN-C

Nutrition (NDA)

EFSA has adopted 63 opinions on 442 general function health claims (Art 13.1) and 7 opinions related to Article 14 and 13.5 health claims applications between January and April 2011.
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/nda/ndaclaims.htm

NDA Panel guidance document on scientific requirements for health claims related to gut and immune function
Adopted on: **28-Jan-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-01139**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1984.htm

General guidance for stakeholders on the evaluation of Article 13.1, 13.5 and 14 health claims
Adopted on: **25-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2011-00216**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2135.htm

Safety of a "novel chewing gum base (Rev-7)" as food ingredient
Adopted on: **25-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00953**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2127.htm

Safety of Touchi Fermented Black Bean (soy) Extract
Adopted on: **08-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00765**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2136.htm

Safety of Yeast beta-glucans as food ingredient
Adopted on: **08-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00952**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2137.htm

Scientific Committee & Advisory Forum (SC&AF)

Guidance on risk assessment concerning potential risks arising from applications of nanoscience and nanotechnologies to food, feed, and pesticides
Adopted on: **06-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00942**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2140.htm

Zoonoses (Data collection)

Scientific report on the analysis of the baseline survey on the prevalence of *Campylobacter* in broiler batches and of *Campylobacter* and *Salmonella* on broiler carcasses, in the EU. Part B: analysis of factors associated with *Salmonella* contamination of broiler carcasses
Adopted on: **14-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00687**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2017.htm

The European Union summary report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks in the European Union in 2009
Adopted on: **23-Feb-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00766**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2090.htm

Scientific report on the updated technical specifications for the harmonised reporting of food-borne outbreaks through the Community reporting system in accordance with Directive 2003/99/EC
Adopted on: **03-Mar-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2009-00696**
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/2101.htm

European Union summary report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic and indicator bacteria from animals and food in the European Union in 2009
Adopted on: **29-Apr-11** Question number: **EFSA-Q-2010-00113**

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Largo N. Palli 5/A
43121 Parma
ITALY

Tel. +39 0521 036 111
Fax +39 0521 036 110

www.efsa.europa.eu