



EFSA in focus **ANIMALS**

ISSUE 03 - MAY 2009

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> Key topics

Wide range of aquatic species susceptible to disease, finds EFSA



In a recent review of available scientific data, EFSA has found a wide range of fish and shellfish, susceptible to certain diseases, such as Epizootic Ulcerative Syndrome, Viral Haemorrhagic Septicaemia and White Spot Disease.

The review follows a request from the European Commission to consider new scientific evidence regarding the susceptibility of species of fish, molluscs and crustaceans to 14 different diseases specified by the European Union.

Scientists were able to single out various species whose susceptibility is demonstrated by clear scientific evidence, including some species which are not currently listed in the relevant EU legislation. According to EFSA, these newly-identified susceptible species should be possibly listed.

However, for many fish species there was only partial evidence or no evidence at all of susceptibility to specific pathogens. For these species, EFSA recommends further research.

Some species were found to be susceptible to several disease agents. Scientists stressed that these species are likely to present a higher level of risk with regard to the spreading of disease – for example when they are traded – than the species which are susceptible to only one disease.

EFSA's advice will help the Commission to update the list of susceptible species farmed in Europe and/or imported into Europe, and to help establish the most appropriate disease control measures. ■

For more information

EFSA quickly responds to dioxins in Irish pork

Two days after the European Commission asked EFSA for its advice on the risks to human health due to the contamination of Irish pork by dioxins, the Authority issued its statement.

Dioxins are persistent man-made chemical contaminants usually formed by industrial combustions and chemical processes that can enter the food chain. High levels of dioxins can be a risk to human health and their toxicity is related to the amount accumulated in the body over many years, the so-called body burden. Dioxin levels in pork and pork products depend on the



fat content, because dioxins accumulate in the fat. The longer the exposure and the higher the fat content, the more dioxins accumulate and stay in the body.

EFSA based its statement on a limited data set using certain assumptions. EFSA assumed that exposure to the raised dioxin levels began in September 2008 and that effective measures had been taken in December to remove this excessive exposure. In other words, the contaminated products had been removed from the market.

In the statement issued on 10 December 2008, EFSA concluded that whilst dioxin contamination of the food supply is undesirable, adverse health effects were unlikely for this single event. This was based on the most likely scenario of someone eating an average amount of Irish pork everyday for the 90 days over which the incident occurred, of which 10% was contaminated at the highest recorded concentration of dioxins. If this happened, the amount of dioxins that would accumulate and stay in the body over time would increase by about 10%. And in a very extreme case, if someone ate a large amount of Irish pork each day over the same period, and all of it was contaminated at the highest recorded concentration, it would still not necessarily lead to adverse health effects.

[For more information](#)

Low risk to human health from gossypol used in animal feed, finds EFSA

Human exposure to gossypol, a compound found in cotton plants, through the consumption of food products from animals fed gossypol seed-derived products is probably low and would not result in adverse effects, according to a recent EFSA opinion.

Gossypol is a compound produced by cotton plants to protect them against pests. It is found in cottonseed and cottonseed products. Cottonseeds are by-products of cotton fibre production, and are rich in oil and proteins, and are therefore used for cottonseed oil production and as a feed supplement.

However, gossypol is listed as an undesirable substance in animal feed and its levels are regulated under EU law.

The European Commission asked EFSA to assess the risks posed to animal health by the presence of free gossypol – the easily extractable form of gossypol – in feed. It also assessed the risks to human health of eating animal products containing gossypol residues.

The main target organ of gossypol toxicity after long term exposure in mammals, including humans, is the testis, resulting in reduced sperm production and motility. According to the opinion, under normal feeding practices, potential exposure should not result in adverse effects in ruminants, poultry and fish. However, monogastric animals, such as pigs and rabbits, appear to be more susceptible to gossypol toxicity than ruminants and potential reproductive effects have not been fully investigated in all monogastric livestock animals.

EFSA found that there is a lack of data on gossypol in feed used for EU livestock. However, amounts of cottonseed meal imported into the EU have fallen significantly in recent years, and relatively little is now used as a feed. Industry sources confirm that it is not used as a feed for laying hens or fish. Furthermore, the processing of commercial cottonseeds using heating and steam, a common practice in the EU, considerably reduces the levels of gossypol.



EFSA concluded that maximum legislated levels of gossypol in feed would not result in any adverse effect on animal health. Similarly, residues in animal products would be very unlikely and would not affect human health.

[For more information](#)

Revise maximum vitamin A levels in feed for main food producing animals, recommends EFSA

Maximum levels of vitamin A used in feed for food producing animals should be revised, according to a recent EFSA opinion. EFSA also recommended monitoring vitamin A in foods of concern such as liver, and providing suitable advice to help consumers avoid excessive intakes.

Vitamin A is an essential nutrient for people and animals, promoting vision, normal growth and development. It is added to feed to meet animal nutrition needs, and maximum levels are set by EU legislation for livestock bred for fattening. The use of vitamin A in feed is relevant for consumers since it remains in food products of animal origin and therefore contributes to people's overall intake.

EFSA looked at consumer exposure to vitamin A from various sources in our diets using studies from several EU countries. It found that a small proportion of the European population is at risk of exceeding the safe upper limit of 3,000 µg per day set in 2002. The greatest risks of exceeding this limit come from eating liver - which contains high concentrations of preformed vitamin A - and from taking vitamin A supplements. Dairy products are also an important source, particularly in north European diets. Eggs make a smaller contribution and fish, and other types of meat, are not a significant source.

Quantitative correlations between the intake of retinol, the most common dietary form of vitamin A, and bone health risk, justifying a lower upper limit for elderly people, could not be established. EFSA's experts considered it advisable for those most at risk of osteoporosis and bone fracture - particularly post-menopausal women - to restrict intake to a lower level of 1,500

µg per day until new data become available. EFSA noted that bone health is affected by various nutritional factors, including vitamin D, calcium, and zinc, which should also be considered when people are given dietary advice.

In its advice to the Commission, EFSA recommended that risk managers consider setting new maximum levels of vitamin A in feed intended for the main food producing animals - pigs, cattle and poultry. These levels would avoid any unnecessary high intakes among consumers without negative effects on animal health and performance. Amongst these recommendations, EFSA proposed setting a level for fattening pigs at around half the current amount allowed by EU legislation.

[For more information](#)



> EFSA at work

EFSA updates list of microorganisms 'presumed safe'

EFSA has reviewed its list of microorganisms resulting from the Qualified Presumption of Safety (QPS) approach. EFSA had previously developed this approach for carrying out risk assessments on microorganisms deliberately introduced into the food chain, either directly or as a source of additives or food enzymes. At the same time it updated the antimicrobial resistance criteria used to judge the safety of microorganisms in food/feed. The taxonomic units already on the list were also reviewed.

The review found that:

- > Recent studies indicated no new safety problems with *Lactobacillus rhamnosus*. Human infection by *L. rhamnosus* is possible but remains rare and mainly affects immunocompromised patients or those with serious underlying disease. Therefore, *L. rhamnosus* remains on the list, but should be monitored.
- > *Lactobacillus coryneformis* is added to the list.
- > Safety concerns linked to *Bacillus* spp. in the food chain come mainly from the ability of some strains of several *Bacillus* species to cause foodborne diseases. *Bacillus cereus* is the

Bacillus species most likely to cause foodborne disease so it is not listed. Other species rarely do. These remain on the list, provided that, for those strains intentionally added to the food chain, there are no food poisoning toxins, no surfactant activity, and no enterotoxic activity. However, the possibility that new virulence factors, not detected by the qualification proposed, could be discovered should be monitored. *Bacillus* spp. also cause rare local or systemic infections which should also remain a topic for surveillance.

- > Rare opportunistic infections have been caused by *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and *Kluyveromyces marxianus* in immunocompromised or otherwise fragile individuals. They remain on the list.
- > Listed *Pichia* species are mainly those used in enzyme production. A note to this effect has been added to their QPS status.

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> *Enterococcus* spp. are a major cause of various kinds of infections, and were not previously listed. Many virulence factors have been identified, but it is still not possible to differentiate between virulent and avirulent strains. No taxonomical unit within the *Enterococcus* genus can be considered as being free from infectious strains. Therefore, *Enterococcus* spp. are not presumed safe.

Some of the new taxonomic groups proposed or notified to EFSA were outside of EFSA's remit, most notably those for which only a direct food use exists today, such as starter cultures. For others there is not enough knowledge about their safety when introduced in the food chain, or they are known producers of secondary metabolites and antibiotics. As a result none of these new taxonomic groups are proposed for QPS status.

The QPS approach could simplify and improve the assessment of consumer safety for microorganisms used as plant protection products. However, it will not cover all the safety aspects of plant protection products and will presumably concern only a minority of the plant protection agents (i.e. *Bacillus* spp. and some yeasts).

The guidelines, updated in 2008, elaborated to eliminate the possibility that microorganisms introduced in the food chain could carry transmissible resistance to antimicrobials, apply to all species granted QPS status and could be used as the basis for being added to the list of species presumed safe. However, there are no such guidelines for yeast resistance to antimicrobials. ■

[For more information](#)

EFSA begins Europe-wide research project on bee decline



EFSA has awarded a grant of €100,000 to a consortium of European scientific institutes to study so-called 'Colony Collapse Disorder' (CCD) in honey bees.

The 9-month project began in January 2009. It aims to identify factors which may contribute to CCD and to highlight gaps in scientific knowledge in order to help guide future research. It will also analyse existing bee surveillance programmes and assess the suitability of the data for measuring CCD across Europe.

"This project will be an important step forward in international efforts to understand and help tackle the reported decline in bee populations, which could have widespread implications not only in environmental terms but also with regard to the food chain," said Hubert Deluyker, EFSA's Director of Scientific Cooperation and Assistance. *"I strongly encourage scientists and other interested parties – such as beekeeping associations, for example – to share their valuable scientific data, knowledge and experience with the organisers of this project."*

Honey bees play an important role in the pollination of crops and a decline in bee populations could have a serious impact on agricultural production. Since 2003, there have been reports of serious losses of bees from beehives in Europe, but the true extent of the losses is hard to estimate as data collection is fragmented and surveillance methodologies are diverse. The cause of CCD is not known, although various factors are thought to be responsible including starvation, viruses, mites, pesticide exposure and climate change.

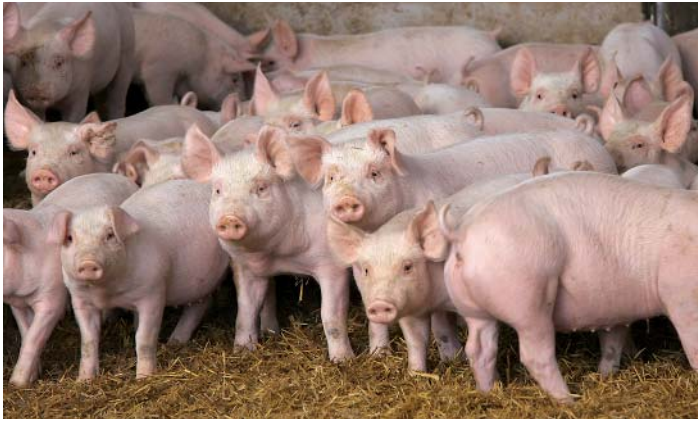
In 2008, EFSA reported on its preliminary survey of the situation in Europe, which drew on information provided by 22 European countries. The survey requested information on honey production, monitoring of chemical residues in honey and existing surveillance programmes for bee mortality, weakening and colony collapse. This project intends to expand on the findings of that report.

In line with Article 36 of its Founding Regulation, EFSA regularly provides grants to partner organisations, nominated by the EU Member States, in order to help EFSA in areas such as data collection and other preparatory work for the development of its opinions, as well as providing scientific and technical support. Since the launch of the scheme in 2007, some 25 such grants have so far been agreed or are currently in negotiation, worth a total of around €3.5million.

The bee decline project consortium is led by the Agence française de sécurité sanitaire des aliments (Afssa) in partnership with the UK's Central Science Laboratory (CSL) and the French Institut national de la recherche agronomique (INRA). Five other national institutes will collaborate in the project: the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale delle Venezie (Italy), the Swiss Bee Research Institute, the Agricultural Institute of Slovenia and the Chemische und Veterinaruntersuchungsamt Freiburg (Germany). ■

[For more information](#)

EFSA evaluates *Salmonella* contamination of pigs at slaughter



EFSA's analysis of the risk factors related to *Salmonella* in slaughter pigs within the European Union (EU) revealed that *Salmonella* infected pigs were more likely to lead to *Salmonella* contaminated carcasses. However, contamination could also come from uninfected pigs. Contamination was also more likely to happen in some slaughterhouses than in others.

EFSA recommended that Member States and the EU pig industry pay specific attention to preventing *Salmonella* spread within slaughterhouses, as they have an important role in the contamination of pig meat.

EFSA noted that control measures at the pig farm level would also be necessary for reducing *Salmonella* in pigs and pig meat, and that consideration should be given to integrated control programmes covering both farms and slaughterhouses.

The analysis revealed some similarities between the *Salmonella* types most frequently reported in humans and those found in slaughter pigs, indicating that pigs and pig meat contribute to *Salmonella* infections in humans, though other animal species and food can also be a source of infection in humans.

Some factors related to *Salmonella* infections were found to vary considerably between countries.

EFSA invited Member States to consider the factors highlighted in the report together with the ones identified in national studies when designing national *Salmonella* control programmes for slaughter pigs. Member States are also invited to carry out further studies nationally to identify the specific factors that put pigs and pig carcasses at risk of *Salmonella* contamination.

The report will serve as a scientific basis to assist Member States in defining the best control measures for reaching the European Commission's *Salmonella* reduction targets. ■

[For more information](#)

EFSA's networking with Member States forges closer ties, finds review

A review of EFSA's 2006 Strategy for Cooperation and Networking has found that ties with Member States are well developed, even after a relatively short period of time. Among Member States the consensus was that there is no need to start new activities. Instead existing initiatives should be continued and some of them further strengthened. These concern: Focal Points; harmonisation of and training on risk assessment methods; data collection; facilitating the submission of applications for Article 36 calls; strengthening existing networks with Member States; and identifying in which areas additional networks may add value.

The strategy calls for strengthening Member States' cooperation through the Advisory Forum in collaboration with the Scientific Committee. For this, two initiatives have already been set up. In all Member States there are now Focal Points to support the Advisory Forum members in their daily networking and scientific cooperation work. These are jointly funded by EFSA and Member States. The positive experience to date, has led Member States to recommend that the Focal Points network be strengthened. In addition, the Steering Group on Cooperation, in which both the Scientific Committee and the Advisory Forum participate, provides oversight on joint European Scientific Cooperation (ESCO) Working Group projects.

Furthermore, several dedicated scientific networks have been created or strengthened in data collection (food consumption, chemical occurrence) and risk assessment (animal health, plant health, GMO, BSE).

Grants awarded to competent organisations under Article 36 of EFSA's Founding Regulation to help prepare opinions or collect data, for example, and contracts awarded to research organisations to carry out scientific work have also grown. In 2009 EFSA will spend €7.5 million on these activities (grants and contracts), compared to €2.9 million and €5.5 million in 2007 and 2008, respectively. Similarly, the list of organisations now stands at 371 organisations – an increase of over 50%, following the recent adoption of the updated list by the EFSA Management Board, broadening the coverage of competences available to EFSA.

Support has also come from the over 200 Panel Members and more than 1000 experts that work with EFSA. In June 2008, EFSA launched an expert database to deepen the pool of specialists that EFSA and Member States can call upon. This database holds information on external scientific experts capable of and willing to assist Member States and EFSA in their scientific activities. By mid April 2009, over 1400 applications had been received from 48 countries.

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Overall, progress in strengthening Member States' cooperation has been made in the four priority areas of the strategy:

1. Exchanging and collecting scientific data and information – In practical terms, this has led to an Information Exchange Platform - an online tool to facilitate the sharing of scientific information - being set up between EFSA and Member States.
2. Sharing risk assessment practices - Several initiatives have already been taken through ESCO Working Groups in the areas of botanicals, emerging risks, and folic acid. Workshops have been organised in pre-accession countries and with current Member States to raise awareness of EFSA's work. Bilateral meetings between EFSA and Member States took place, e.g. on issues where there was or may be sources of divergence. To be prepared for crisis situations, exercises have been conducted with participation from Advisory Forum members and the European Commission.
3. Harmonising risk assessment methods - The ESCO Working Group on harmonisation has completed and delivered its report to EFSA's Executive Director. In addition, EFSA regularly organises scientific colloquia with key scientists from the Member States as well as other scientific events for open scientific debate.
4. Promoting coherence in risk communications – The Advisory Forum Communications Working Group has been instrumental in promoting cooperation and coherence. Pre-notification and sharing of communications between members, including early warning on emerging and topical issues, is consistently the highest priority. Strengthening such practical two-way, timely and responsive cooperation will continue to be prioritised. In addition, publications and events with national food safety authorities, and links between EFSA's website and national counterparts have also played an important role.

All told, it is clear from this interim review that cooperation and networking between Member States and EFSA has already come a long way. EFSA is committed to continue to build bridges and forge alliances across the EU, as stated in the Authority's 2009-2013 Strategic Plan, adopted in December 2008. ■

[For more information](#)

EFSA seeks external scientific experts to review the quality of its scientific outputs

EFSA has published a call to select external reviewers for a working group that will help the Authority evaluate the quality of its scientific work.

In 2007, EFSA proposed a review system to help assess the quality of its scientific activities. The system involves a self review, during the development of documents, an internal review by senior scientific and communications staff at EFSA, and an external review by high-level independent external experts.

The present call seeks to find external experts to help EFSA identify whether in the development of its scientific outputs best assessment practices were followed in collecting, describing, evaluating and interpreting the scientific data. The experts will also assess whether the conclusions and recommendations were supported by an adequate description of the reasoning under-

lying the interpretation of the data, with due attention paid to any assumptions and uncertainties, and whether the terms of reference were adequately addressed in the conclusions.

In total, 24 external experts will be included in the working group and a reserve list will be created. Three experts will come together in an external review subgroup to cover each of the seven areas of activity: chemical risk assessment and connected fields (2 groups), nutrition and novel foods, biological risk assessment and zoonoses data collection, animal health and welfare, plant health, GMOs, risk assessment methodologies and emerging risks. The external evaluation of all the activity areas should be finalised by the end of September 2009. ■

The call was launched on 24 April and will close on 15 June.

[For more information.](#)

EFSA colloquium on assessing the health benefits of controlling *Campylobacter* in the food chain

4-5 December 2008 - Rome, Italy

Poultry meat remains likely to be the most important cause of human exposure to *Campylobacter* bacteria, agreed participants at EFSA's Scientific Colloquium on 'Assessing the health benefits of controlling *Campylobacter* in the food chain', in Rome on 4-5 December 2008.

The participants reviewed in four separate discussion groups: the source attribution and health impact of *Campylobacter*; its quantitative risk assessment in broiler meat; its resistance to fluoroquinolone antimicrobials; and effective control measures in broiler meat production from farm to fork.

During the final plenary session, scientists discussed the conclusions and agreed that even though there are many reservoirs and transmission routes for the bacterium, poultry meat remains likely to be the most important cause of human exposure. *Campylobacter* was recognised as the main cause of acute bacterial enteritis in Europeans.

Scientists also added that close cooperation between the medical, and the food and veterinary sectors is essential to improve data collection. Reliable quantitative data throughout the food chain in Europe will help finetune models for risk assessment and identify the most successful intervention measures.

The scientists noted that the use of fluoroquinolones in poultry has led to the emergence of resistance to these antibiotics in *Campylobacter* in poultry, and in turn in humans. Reducing the use of fluoroquinolones in animals will benefit public health, although in the case of *Campylobacter* it is presently not possible to quantify the precise impact on human health, the scientists added.

Some 90 scientists and stakeholders from 30 countries, including the US and New Zealand, attended the meeting organised by EFSA. It was the twelfth in the series of EFSA's Scientific Colloquia.

Representatives from the European Commission, ECDC (the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control), EMEA (the European Medicines Agency) and Member States also took part in the Colloquium.

Full details of the conclusions will be published on EFSA's website in a summary report in spring 2009.

[For more information](#)

Meeting to discuss feed additive applications

23 October 2008 - Parma, Italy

Industry representatives, applicants, consultants, and other people involved in the preparation of applications for feed additives gathered in Parma in October 2008. They came to hear from EFSA how best to use the guidance on how to submit the applications for authorisation of feed additives that are required under EU law.

EU law establishes the rules governing the EU-wide authorisation of additives for use in animal nutrition. These rules help protect human health, animal health and welfare, the environment, and users' and consumers' interests, whilst ensuring the internal market functions effectively. The rules state the legislative requirements that have to be satisfied by the dossier accompanying the application. They also state what scientific information EFSA requires to evaluate the application: for instance, the data needed to identify and characterize the additive concerned; and the studies that must be submitted to demonstrate the additive's efficacy and safety for humans, animals and the environment. In May 2008, a new regulation was issued on the detailed rules for preparing and presenting applications, and for assessing the authorisation of feed additives.

EFSA has prepared a series of guidance documents to complement the rules established in the abovementioned regulation. Guidance was prepared for the different categories of feed additives: technological, sensory, nutritional, zootechnical, and coccidiostats and histomonostats. The Authority also prepared guidance on horizontal issues, such as tolerance and efficacy studies in target animals, microbial studies, consumer safety, user safety, environmental risk assessment and the extrapolation



tion of data from major to minor species. There is also guidance on dealing with additives already authorised for use in food and for the re-evaluation of certain additives already authorised under Directive 70/524/EEC.

The objective of the meeting was to present these guidance documents to stakeholders. The meeting was organised in two sessions. In the general session, EFSA presented issues that are relevant for all types of feed additives applications/dossiers, from administrative aspects to issues related to the scientific evaluation. Three parallel sessions were organised where issues specifically related to zootechnical, nutritional and technological categories of feed additives were addressed.

[For more information.](#)

Interagency meeting shares best risk assessment practices

4-5 November 2008 - Parma, Italy

Risk assessors from many EU scientific committees and panels gathered in Parma on 4-5 November 2008 to share experiences and best practices in risk assessment. This will further help improve the quality of and the communications about risk assessments, and ultimately support risk managers in their decision-making.

Participants considered scientific issues of common interest related to risk assessment, such as transparency and terminol-



ogy, and also identified areas and topics for further cooperation, such as nanotechnology, emerging risks, international dialogue, data sharing, and sharing of practices.

This was the 4th annual meeting of Chairs and Secretariats of European Commission and Agency Scientific Committees, and Panels involved in risk assessment. The meeting was attended by representatives from the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the European Environment Agency, the European Chemicals Agency, the European Medicines Agency, the Commission's Directorates-General for Health and Consumers, and for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, and EFSA.

[For more information.](#)

> Calls

Article 36 calls

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

Article 36 calls awarded

CFP/EFSA/AHAW/2008/01

Epidemiology of different agents causing disease in aquatic animals: scientific review and database development

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science (CEFAS) (UK); Central Veterinary Institute (CVI) – Stichting Dienst Landbouwkundig Onderzoek (DLO) (NL); Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale" (IZSA&M) (IT)

CFP/EFSA/AHAW/2008/02

Animal Welfare Risk Assessment Guidelines on Transport

Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale" (IZSA&M) (IT)

CFP/EFSA/AHAW/2008/03

Scientific review on Tuberculosis in wildlife in the EU

Central Science Laboratory, (UK)

CFP/EFSA/AHAW/2008/04

Scientific reviews on Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever and Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease

Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise "G. Caporale" (IZSA&M) (IT)

CFP/EFSA/AMU/2008/02

Bee Mortality and Bee Surveillance in Europe

Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments (AFSSA) (FR); Central Science Laboratory, (UK); Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique (INRA) (FR)

CFP/EFSA/FEEDAP/2008/01

Selected trace and ultratrace elements: Biological role, content in feed and requirements in animal nutrition - Elements for risk assessment

Universiteit Gent (BE)

CFP/EFSA/ZOONOSES/2008/01

Development of harmonised schemes for monitoring and reporting of rabies and Q fever in animals in the European Union

Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments (AFSSA) (FR); Central Institute for animal Disease Control CIDC-Lelystad (NL); Friedrich-Loeffler-Institut, Federal Research Institute for Animal health (DE); National Veterinary Research Institute (PL); Veterinary Laboratories Agency (UK)

CFP/EFSA/ZOONOSES/2008/02

Development of survey methods for food borne pathogens in foodstuffs in the European Union

Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) (DE)

[For all calls awarded.](#)

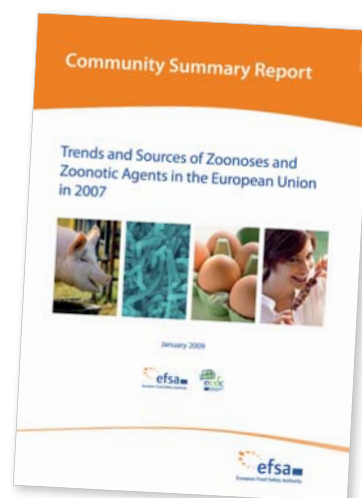
> Publications

Annual Zoonoses report now available

EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their Community Zoonoses Report for 2007, which analyses the occurrence across the European Union of infectious diseases that can be transmitted from animals to humans.

The report shows that although figures varied considerably between Member States, *Campylobacter* infections still topped the list of zoonotic diseases in the EU and that the number of cases due to *Salmonella* infections in humans fell for the fourth year in a row. Cases of Listeriosis remained at the same level, following a significant increase in past years. ■

[For more information.](#)



> Consultations

Public consultation on transparency in risks assessments

EFSA launched a public consultation on its draft opinion on ensuring transparency in the scientific aspects of the risk assessment process. This follows EFSA's recommendations on transparency in risk assessments procedures, published in May 2006. The general principles covered in the opinion include identifying, documenting and explaining key factors underpinning the scientific process, their relative importance and their possible influence on the assessment outcome, such as:

- > The rationale for any decision to include or exclude data, and the strengths and limitations of the data set used.
- > Key assumptions inherent in the risk assessment, for instance in relation to data extrapolation from experimental animals to human beings.
- > Identification of limitations or uncertainties underlying the risk assessment, arising for example from limited exposure data.
- > Variability factors for instance between different population groups or species that may affect the risk assessment.
- > Different outcomes compared with other scientific assessments, including implications of potentially contradictory data and diverging views with other expert bodies.

The opinion forms part of an overall framework of EFSA's good risk assessment practices. These include EFSA's quality assurance process, and its system of internal and external review to continually review and strengthen the quality of EFSA's scientific work.

EFSA has also published a technical report summarising the guidance documents, guidelines and working documents developed or in use by EFSA and its Scientific Panels. This technical report will be updated regularly. ■

The consultation closed on 15 February 2009.

[For more information.](#)



> Latest mandates received

Mandates received per unit: October 2008-January 2009

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

Assessment Methodology (AMU)

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

Requestor: EFSA
Reception date: 13 Nov 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-717
Deadline: 31 Dec 2009

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

BSE-related risk of bovine intestines

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 23 Jan 2009
Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00226

Revision of the joint CEF/BIOHAZ guidance document on the submission of data for the evaluation of safety and efficacy of substances for the removal of microbial surface contamination of food of animal origin intended for human consumption

Requestor: EFSA
Reception date: 01 Dec 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00196
Deadline: 30 Jun 2009

Trends of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in zoonotic infections

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 12 Dec 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-781

Request for a scientific opinion on genetic TSE resistance in goats

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 01 Dec 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-774
Deadline: 31 Mar 2009

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

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 30 Oct 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-753
Deadline: 31 Mar 2009

Project to study alternatives to carcass destruction systems using the bunker system

Requestor: Spain
Reception date: 16 Oct 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-713
Deadline: 22 Apr 2009

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

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 10 Oct 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-712
Deadline: 31 Mar 2009

Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)

Further elaboration and update in relation to the Commission request for an opinion related to marine biotoxins in shellfish

Requestor: European Commission
Reception date: 19 Nov 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00203
Deadline: 30 Mar 2009

Request for urgent scientific and technical assistance on the risks for public health due to contamination by dioxins in pig meat from Ireland

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 08 Dec 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-777
 Deadline: 10 Dec 2008

Feed Additives (FEEDAP)

Koffogran (nicarbazin) for chickens for fattening

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 23 Jan 2009
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00225
 Deadline: 31 Jul 2009

Lactiferm (*Enterococcus faecium*) for chickens for fattening

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 08 Jan 2009
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2009-00202
 Deadline: under consideration

Biosaf Sc 47 (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) for calves for rearing

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 18 Dec 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-783
 Deadline: 30 Jun 2009

Animavit (*Bacillus subtilis*) for piglets (weaned) and pigs for fattening

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 20 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-771
 Deadline: under consideration

Cygro 10G (maduramicin ammonium) for turkeys

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-757
 Deadline: 13 Sep 2009

Cycostat 66G (robenidine hydrochloride) for rabbits for breeding and fattening purposes

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-752
 Deadline: 10 Sep 2009

Avatec (lasalocid sodium A) for turkeys (16 weeks)

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-751
 Deadline: 19 Sep 2009

Cygro 10G (maduramicin) for chickens for fattening

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-750
 Deadline: 10 Sep 2009

Clinacox 0.5% (diclazuril) for chickens for fattening

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-749
 Deadline: 15 Sep 2009

FINASE EC (6-phytase) for chickens for fattening/ chickens for laying; laying hens; turkeys for fattening/ turkeys for breeding; piglets (weaned); pigs for fattening; sows; ducks and other minor poultry species (i.e. geese, quail, pigeon, pheasants and other game birds)

Requestor: European Commission
 Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
 Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-748
 Deadline: under consideration

Zoonoses (Data Collection)

Request for a report on specifications for harmonized monitoring survey for *Yersinia enterocolitica* in pigs

Requestor: EFSA
Reception date: 03 Nov 2008
Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-725
Deadline: 31 Dec 2009

> Opinions and other documents

List of adopted opinions and other documents per unit: October 2008-January 2009

Disclaimer: This is not the full list of all EFSA opinions but only those considered relevant to this newsletter. [For full list.](#)

Animal Health & Welfare (AHAW)

General approach to fish welfare and on the concept of pain and sentience in fish

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-708
Adopted on: 30 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902344910.htm

Classical Swine Fever (CSF): Risk of CSF Virus in fresh meat from vaccinated pigs

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-427
Adopted on: 11 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902309158.htm

Control and eradication of Classic Swine Fever in wild boar and animal health safety of fresh meat derived from pigs vaccinated against Classic Swine Fever

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-200
Adopted on: 11 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902308837.htm

Animal welfare aspects of husbandry systems for farmed fish - sea bass and gilthead seabream

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-149
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902193915.htm

Animal welfare aspects of husbandry systems for farmed fish - carp species

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-148
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902226269.htm

Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)

Use and mode of action of bacteriophages in food production

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-400
Endorsed for public consultation on: 22 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902309694.htm

Special measures to reduce the risk for consumers through *Salmonella* in table eggs, e.g. cooling of table eggs

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-198
Adopted on: 22 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902325412.htm

Project to study alternatives to carcass destruction systems using the bunker system

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-713
Adopted on: 21 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902322052.htm

FuelCal® technology as new alternative method of disposal or use of animal by-products

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-178
 Adopted on: 21 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902322080.htm

Maintenance for the QPS list for microorganisms used for feed and food production

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-006
 Adopted on: 10 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902221481.htm

Prospective challenges facing the EFSA Biological Hazards Panel

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-778
 Adopted on: 23 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902229424.htm

Food safety aspects of animal welfare of husbandry systems for farmed fish

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-297
 Adopted on: 23 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902227622.htm

Human and animal exposure risk related to Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies (TSEs) from milk and milk products derived from small ruminants

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-310
 Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902166533.htm

Contaminants in the food chain (CONTAM)**Request for a scientific opinion on cadmium in food**

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-138
 Adopted on: 30 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902396126.htm

Saponins from *Madhuca longifolia* as undesirable substances in animal feed

Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-221
 Adopted on: 29 Jan 2009
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902343003.htm

Free gossypol as undesirable substance in animal feed

Question number: EFSA-Q-2005-222
 Adopted on: 04 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902297879.htm

Request for urgent scientific and technical assistance on the risks for public health due to contamination by dioxins in pig meat from Ireland

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-777
 Adopted on: 10 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902210863.htm

Yessotoxins in shellfish

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-065D
 Adopted on: 02 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902314590.htm

Feed Additives (FEEDAP)**Functional groups of additives as described in Annex 1 of Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003**

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-173
 Adopted on: 11 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902222040.htm

Safety and efficacy of Phyzyme XP 10000 (TPT/L), 6-phytase, as feed additive for chickens for fattening, laying hens, ducks for fattening, turkeys for fattening, piglets (weaned), pigs for fattening and sows

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-272
Adopted on: 10 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902224372.htm

Safety and efficacy of Probiotic LACTINA® (*Lactobacillus acidophilus*, *Lactobacillus helveticus*, *Lactobacillus bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus lactis*, *Streptococcus thermophilus*, *Enterococcus faecium*) for chickens for fattening, piglets and pigs

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-135
Adopted on: 09 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902299683.htm

Safety and efficacy of Natugrain® TS (endo-1,4-β-xylanase and endo-1,4-β-glucanase) as a feed additive for piglets (weaned), chickens for fattening, laying hens, turkeys for fattening and ducks

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-013
Adopted on: 09 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902225382.htm

Safety and efficacy of the product Toyocerin® (*Bacillus cereus* var. *toyoi*) as feed additive for rabbit breeding does

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-287
Adopted on: 09 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902299515.htm

Consequences for the consumer of the use of vitamin A in animal nutrition

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-121
Adopted on: 19 Nov 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902310217.htm

Safety and efficacy of the product Ronozyme® NP (6-phytase) for chickens for fattening

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-133
Adopted on: 18 Nov 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902199809.htm

Safety of L-valine for all animal species

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-413
Adopted on: 18 Nov 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902207009.htm

Compatibility of the microbial product 035 (*Bacillus subtilis*) with decoquinat and narasin/nicarbazin

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-423
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902174767.htm

Technical guidance for assessing the safety of feed additives for the environment

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-408
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902153679.htm

Compatibility of the microbial product BioPlus 2B (*Bacillus licheniformis* and *Bacillus subtilis*) with lasalocid sodium

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-332
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902174599.htm

Safety and efficacy of Advastat® (acarbose) as feed additive for cattle for fattening and dairy cows

Question number: EFSA-Q-2007-172
Adopted on: 22 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902172778.htm

Technical guidance: microbial studies

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-461
 Adopted on: 21 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902139277.htm

Safety and efficacy of Biosaf Sc47 (*Saccharomyces cerevisiae*) as feed additive for dairy buffaloes

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-010
 Adopted on: 21 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902159456.htm

Scientific Committee (SC)**ESCO Working Group on fostering harmonised risk assessment approaches in Member States**

Question number: EFSA-Q-2008-389
 Adopted on: 01 Dec 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/National_Focal_Points/Scientific_Cooperation_projects/efsa_locale-1178620753812_harmonised_raapproaches.htm

Zoonoses (Data Collection)**Report of the Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection on the analysis of the baseline survey on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in turkey flocks, in the EU, 2006-2007: Part B: factors related to *Salmonella* flock prevalence and distribution of *Salmonella* serovars**

Question number: EFSA-Q-2006-041B
 Adopted on: 10 Oct 2008
http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902151685.htm

The Community Summary Report on Trends and Sources of Zoonoses and Zoonotic Agents in the European Union in 2007

http://www.efsa.europa.eu/EFSA/efsa_locale-1178620753812_1211902269834.htm

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