

FSA Scientific Advisory Committee Activities update

Introduction

This document summarises the recent activity of the FSA’s Scientific Advisory Committees as of **20 November 2020**.

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Next meeting: 10 March 2021 6

Advisory Committee for Social Science (ACSS)

- **Chair:** Professor Susan Michie
- **Secretariat:** acss@food.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://acss.food.gov.uk/>

Recent Activity

Last meeting: 15 October 2020 – Closed session

Discussed future working topics. The two new topics agreed by the ACSS will be:

- Kitchen behaviours examining food hygiene practices in a domestic and catering settings. This project is out for tender and will have immediately start having input from the ACSS.
- Climate change to start mid-2021. The ACSS will seek to build on findings from the climate change report from the Government due in the middle of 2021. This working group is still in the scoping phase and will seek to better understand the effect of climate change on consumer behaviour.

The Assurance Working Group. New processes of evaluation and impact capture have been developed by the group and introduced to the social science team. Development of research quality toolkits is now being scoped.

The Risk Communications Group. The communicating risk report was published and can be found here: <https://www.food.gov.uk/research/research-projects/communicating-risk>. This drew on multiple research methods to inform development of a practical toolkit for communications personnel. The next steps will involve implementing the tools created.

Minutes and papers from the 5th ACSS meeting in June are published here: <https://acss.food.gov.uk/5thACSSPlenary>

The meeting discussed the Food and You surveys and fellowships, COVID-19 and recent/upcoming publications.

Next open meeting: 1 December 2020.

This will include updates on working groups, a presentation on a review of critical appraisal of third-party evidence and a discussion of the ACSS work programme.

Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes (ACNFP)

- **Chair:** Dr Camilla Alexander-White
- **Secretariat:** acnfp@food.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://acnfp.food.gov.uk/>

Recent activity

Last meeting: 10 September 2020

- **COT CBD Position** – The Committee discussed the COT's/FSA position on the data limitations and information surrounding CBD.
- **CBD Applications** (Reserved business)- The Committee were asked to compare and contrast two CBD dossiers as a training exercise.
- **Request for Advice for CBD Applicants** – The Committee considered a request for advice to CBD applicants regarding the specifications in the event of a joint application
- **ACNFP Code of Practice:** The Committee discussed final changes to the Code of Practice.

Next meeting: 25 November 2020

At their next meeting, which will be online, the Committee are considering two GE literature reviews and a report on the risk profile of edible Insects.

Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF)

- **Chair:** Professor Bill Keevil
- **Secretariat:** acmsf@food.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://acmsf.food.gov.uk/>

Recent activity

Last meeting was on 22 October 2020. Issues they considered include:

1. Horizon Scanning Workshop Output (The Committee considered the draft final version of the output from the June horizon scanning workshop). Final version to be published later.
2. Review of the ACMSF report on vacuum packaging and associated processes (The Committee discussed the subgroup on non-proteolytic *C. botulinum* and vacuum and modified atmosphere packaged foods recommendation for the above report published in 1992 to be reviewed and to identify priority areas of work for consideration). [Link](#)
3. Epidemiology of Foodborne Infections Group (Members were updated on the outcome of the group's meeting held on 6 October 2020). [Link](#)
4. STEC Research in Scotland (The Committee received a presentation from Food Standards Scotland on STEC research in Scotland). [Link](#)
5. Committee Update (The Committee received updates from the following subgroups: Ad Hoc Group on incidents, Working Group on AMR, Surveillance Working group, Ad Hoc Group on QACs and Biocides used in food processing).

Information papers circulated to Members include:

6. TBEV: draft risk assessment in relation to food. [Link](#)

7. Annual update on the FSA's Antimicrobial resistance programme. [Link](#)
8. ACMSF Work plan. [Link](#)
9. Items of interest from the literature. [Link](#)
10. Risk assessment: coronavirus risk to UK consumers via shellfish and crops grown on land treated with sewage sludge. [Link](#)
11. Risk Assessment: risk of food or food contact materials and surfaces being a source or transmission route of SARS-CoV-2 for UK consumers? [Link](#)
12. FAO guide to ranking food safety risks at national level. [Link](#)

Next meeting: 28 January 2021

Advisory Committee on Animal Feeding stuffs (ACAF)

- **Chair:** -
- **Secretariat:** acaf@food.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://acaf.food.gov.uk/>

Recent Activity

Last meeting: 27 June 2019

Next meeting: No dates set for 2020 meetings – Committee under review

Committee on Toxicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COT)

- **Chair:** Professor Alan Boobis
- **Secretariat:** cot@food.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://cot.food.gov.uk/>

Recent activity

Last meeting: 27 October 2020

The COT discussed iodine in the maternal diet, dioxins, cumulative mycotoxin exposure, herbal supplements used in pregnancy and less than lifetime exposure.

Next meeting: 1 December 2020

Committee on Carcinogenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COC)

- **Chair:** Professor David Harrison
- **Secretariat:** COC@phe.gov.uk

- **Website:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/committee-on-carcinogenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment-coc>

Recent activity

Last meeting – 16 July 2020

The COC reviewed guidance statement overview and specific guidance statements, discussed the draft position paper on “The tumour micro-environment” and followed up on horizon scanning.

Next meeting: 24th November 2020

Topics to be discussed include:

- Scope of new guidance statement – weight of evidence approach to assessing modification of cancer risk.
- Horizon Scanning

We are also holding 2 joint discussion sessions with COM and COT on the 24 Nov and the 25 Nov to discuss items of joint interest and think about upcoming work of relevance to both Committees.

We are offering an open invitation to any COT members who wish to join the meeting and provide input and gain insight into the work of COM and COC.

The Committee on Mutagenicity of Chemicals in Food, Consumer Products and the Environment (COM)

- **Chair:** Dr David Lovell
- **Secretariat:** COM@phe.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/committee-on-mutagenicity-of-chemicals-in-food-consumer-products-and-the-environment>

Recent activity

Last meeting: 9 June 2020

The agenda included a presentation on mutational spectra by Prof David Phillips, review of guidance statements and the guidance statement series update, COM response to the EFSA public consultation on the draft guidance on aneugenicity assessment and work on the report and paper from the workshop on interpretation of genotoxicity data held last year.

Next meeting: 25 November 2020

COM Overarching Guidance Document

Finalising guidance statements on –

- Germ Cell Mutagens
- 3D Models
- Nanomaterial Testing

- QSAR Models

Guidance statement on Testing for Impurities – update

Statement on Quantitative Assessment of Genotoxicity Data – discussion paper

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN)

- **Chair:** Professor Ian Young
- **Secretariat:** SACN@phe.gov.uk
- **Website:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/scientific-advisory-committee-on-nutrition>

Recent activity

Last meeting: 20 November

[Agenda items](#) include: Vitamin D, Lower carbohydrate diets for adults with type 2 diabetes and Horizon Scanning (Iron & DRVs).

[Next meeting:](#) 10 March 2021