

# **Summary report of the meeting held on 21 December 1998 in Brussels (approved at the meeting on 05 February 1999)**

## **List of Participants**

### **MEMBERS**

Prof. A. Osterhaus (chairperson)

Prof. R. Gilbert (first vice-chairperson)

Prof. D. Vuitton (second vice-chairperson)

Prof. J. Fink-Gremmels, Prof. A. Johnston, Prof. A. Macri, Prof. A. Mantis, Prof. E. Nurmi , Prof. E. Quinto Fernandez, Dr. J. Schlundt, Dr. I. Vagsholm, Prof. F. Van Knapen, Prof. P. Willeberg

### **APOLOGIES**

Prof. O. Kaaden, Prof. V. Caporale

### **ABSENT**

none

### **COMMISSION**

Mr. T. Christoforou (LS)

Mr. R. Vanhoorde (DG XXIV), Mr. B. Verleysen (DG XXIV)

Mr. H. Winter (DG VI)

## **1. Declarations of interest**

No new declarations of interest were made.

## **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted.

## **3. Adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 30 November**

The minutes were adopted subject to some editorial changes.

## **4. Discussion and possible adoption of a scientific opinion concerning cooling of carcasses during transport**

The Committee examined the revised draft report as well as some additional information and comments received from members of the Working Group.

The Committee considered that the current text was lacking in coherence and clarity and that the draft report needs an update in the light of more recent scientific evidence. Furthermore, several members questioned the relevance of

growth characteristics of particular bacteria that are addressed in the draft report.

The Committee maintained its previous decision not to return to the Working Group and decided to set up a restricted drafting group in order to upgrade and to finalise the draft report (contributions to be circulated by e-mail / fax) in view of its possible adoption at the next plenary.

## **5. Establishment of a Working Group for a complementary risk assessment on the use of hormones**

The chairperson/rapporteur of the Working Group presented a list of possible external experts for the Working Group. It was explained that the list was established on the basis of the scientific qualifications of the candidates and on their recent publications in peer reviewed scientific literature. Scientists that are currently carrying out research projects on hormones which are financed by the Commission or scientists which have formally and publicly taken a position in the "hormone case" were omitted for the sake of independence. Scientists with known regulatory or commercial involvement were disregarded for the same reason.

Whilst recognising the high qualifications of the experts proposed, several members questioned the appropriateness of the great number of American scientists and also their independence. A few questioned the limited number of experts covering the field of veterinary science.

The rapporteur explained that, because of the ban on growth hormones in the EU, expertise in Europe on this issue is not overwhelming and that, moreover, several famous European scientists are involved in Commission-funded research projects. A Commission representative stressed that the highest priority should be given to the scientific excellence and the independence of the experts and confirmed that the Working Group as well as the Committee would have full access to the outcome of the additional studies initiated by the Commission. The Secretariat clarified that, in view of the sensitivity of the subject, members of the Working Group will be asked to declare in writing any interests that could be regarded as prejudicial to their independence in the light of this question. Furthermore, it was clarified that the rapporteur has the possibility to come back to the plenary in order to consider possible changes / extensions to the Working Group whenever this appeared appropriate.

Recognising the experience and scientific excellence of the experts proposed, the Committee mandated the rapporteur to select the Working Group members from the list on the basis of their field of expertise and their availability. The Secretariat is asked to circulate subsequently the final list to the members of the Committee for formal approval. However, considering the pressure of time, it was decided that members will only be given a few days to respond to this consultation.

## **6. First discussion on a preliminary draft report concerning the use Bovine Somatotropin**

The rapporteur presented the draft report which is addressing public health aspects and animal health and animal welfare aspects. It was explained that, because of the nature of the aspects to be addressed, the Working Group concentrating on the public health aspects considered r-BST whereas the other group considered evidence arising from the use of products which are currently licensed and commercialised in certain third countries.

A joint meeting with the rapporteurs of both Working Groups was organised in view of integrating and balancing the input of both Working Groups in one single draft report. The rapporteur regretted that further changes were made after this co-ordination meeting. A consensus by the welfare group is expected to be available by 13 January.

Being appointed "chef de file" on this question, the Committee asked to be provided, for the next plenary, with the final and approved part on animal welfare aspects and that the chairperson / rapporteur of the other Working Group be invited to the Committee to participate in the discussion in the plenary.

With a view to have the final draft report available for the March plenary, members of the Committee are invited to communicate their comments to the rapporteur (with copy to the secretariat) by 05 February. Considering the comprehensiveness of the issue it was decided to transform the March plenary into a two-day meeting (i.e. 15-16 March

1999).

## **7. Establishment of a joint Working Group with the Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) on microbiological standards for listeria**

A Working Group will be organised as soon as the members who will participate on behalf of the Scientific Committee for Food (SCF) are appointed.

## **8. Progress report on the request for a scientific opinion on the evaluation of microbiological criteria and temperatures for storage and transport of products of animal origin intended for human consumption:**

- partim microbiological criteria;**
- partim temperatures for storage and transport;**

The rapporteur gave a feedback on the Working Group meeting of 17 December. A final Working Group meeting is scheduled for 04 February.

## **9. Progress report on the request for a scientific opinion concerning the revision of ante- and post- mortem inspection procedures for an alternative inspection system for the slaughter of pigs**

The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for 22 January.

## **10. Progress report on the request for a scientific opinion concerning the prevalence and methods of control of cysticercosis**

The second Working Group meeting is scheduled for 29 January.

## **11. Progress report on the state of progress on the multidisciplinary Working Group on antimicrobial resistance**

Feedback was given on the ongoing work. A Working Group meeting is planned for 07 January.

The Secretariat referred to an exercise that it had been informed was being organised "in parallel" by industry and pointed out the possible conflict of interest and the possible adverse public perception of an active involvement by Committee and Working Group members.

## **12. Feed-back by the chairman on subjects discussed in the SSC which are of interest to the Committee**

The chairperson gave a short overview of ongoing work in the SSC. Special attention was drawn to the harmonisation of risk assessment procedures where input from the Committee is requested. Two members of the Committee will prepare a contribution by mid-January.

In future the agenda of the SSC will be made available to the Committee for information.

## **13. Feed-back by members of the Committee having attended Working Group meetings of other Scientific Committees**

Reference was made to the Working Group on Johne's / Crohn's disease (next - final? - meeting is scheduled for 19 January) and to the work on fallen stock and recycling of animal waste.

## **14. Miscellaneous**

Next meetings are scheduled for:

05 February 1999 (chairperson apologised),

*15 and 16* March 1999,

30 April 1999,

11 June 1999.