

Minutes of the first meeting of the expert group to discuss the Scientific Opinion published by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) on inactivation of indicator microorganisms and biological hazards by standard and/or alternative processing methods in Category 2 and 3 animal by-products and derived products to be used as organic fertilizers and/or soil improvers¹ with the prospect of determination of end points in the manufacturing chain of certain organic fertilizers and soil improvers

14 March 2022, Brussels (Webex)

1. Approval of the agenda

An annotated agenda was circulated prior to the meeting and approved at the beginning of the meeting.

2. Nature of the meeting

The meeting was non-public. The meeting was held via Webex with the representatives of the competent veterinary authorities of Member States and EEA countries attending. MT, LU, HU, SK sent their apologies. The Chair noted the absence of the Council and European Parliament.

3. Discussion

3.1. Introduction

DG SANTE explained the interactions with Reg. (EU) 2019/1009 (EU fertiliser Regulation). Animal by-products (ABP) may reach an end point in the ABP manufacturing chain for fertilisers (Art. 5(2) and (4) of (EU) 1069/2009(ABP Regulation)). The EFSA-mandate was to provide a risk assessment for certain derived products, which is now available¹.

EFSA explained valorising by percentage: the processing methods to assess were compared with the standard method used for biogas. If indicator microorganisms are reduced in the same proportion, the valorising is 100 %. Some derived products are highly safe, for others risk mitigation measures will be necessary, and some may not be considered as safe.

Meat-and-bone meal, processed animal protein and other widely used protein products comply with microbiological requirements; however, it might be necessary to introduce measures to prevent fraudulent use as feed.

The objective of the legal draft will be to determine safe end points for the use in, or as fertilisers. The goal is to get an EU fertilising product that can be placed on the market without further animal health controls.

3.2. List of issues discussed

A discussion took place on the following issues:

- *Defining an end point should provide for a safe product, regardless of its use. For proteinaceous products, ensure the feed ban is respected.*

¹ (EFSA journal 2021; 19(12):6932)

DG SANTE: end points depend on the further use, there is a completely different risk if products go to textile industry (e.g.: hides and skins) or if they are used as fertilizers.

- *PAPs in fertilizers should not have an endpoint.*

DG SANTE: PAPs can only be an ingredient and have to comply with the feedban rules (no animals for pasture within 21 days).

- *Could processing methods, approved at the national level and to apply only at national territory, become an end point?*

DG SANTE: Harmonised standard processing methods are safe. Alternative processing methods should be subject to individual EFSA assessments.

4. Next steps

DG SANTE invites Member States to provide comments by 25 March 2022.