SECOND REPORT OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE FOR ANIMAL NUTRITION ON THE USE OF NICARBAZIN IN FEEDINGSTUFFS FOR FATTENING CHICKEN

Opinion expressed 5 July 1985

In accordance with its opinion delivered on 14 April 1982 (*) and having received from the firm Merck, Sharp and Dohme further documentary information on nicarbazin, the Committee reassessed the use of the additive in feedingstuffs for fattening chicken. For the purposes of reassessment, all the data on nicarbazin supplied up to June 1985 were taken into consideration.

Further studies on residues in the tissues of chicken (liver, kidney, muscles, skin, fatty tissues) carried out in 1983 and using an improved polarographic method to determine the levels of DNC (limit of determination expressed in terms of nicarbazin : 0.1 mg/kg) have shown that the actual values are higher than those previously estimated by extrapolation from results obtained using a low-sensitivity polarographic method. No data have been made available as to the metabolism of nicarbazin in chicken.

Additional studies carried out in 1983 and 1985 on the environmental effects of nicarbazin have shown that nicarbazin is not phytotoxic and has no significant effects on aquatic life, methanogenesis or bacterial nitrification. No data have been made available on the biodegradability in dung and soil of excreted products derived from nicarbazin.

While taking account of the additional information on tissue residues, the Committee considers that, in the absence of data on the metabolism of nicarbazin and the qualitative composition of its residues, the withdrawal period for the supplemented feedingstuff before slaughter should be extended to 9 days, at least so that the residue levels estimated by determination of DNC do not exceed 0.2 mg/kg.

(*) Reports of the Scientific Committee for Animal Nutrition, fourth series (1984), No EUR 8769, p. 51

However, the Committee is unable to deliver a final opinion as to whether the use of nicarbazin is harmless until appropriate studies have been carried out on the metabolism of the product in chicken and the biodegradation of its excreted products in dung and soil.