



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
HEALTH & CONSUMER PROTECTION DIRECTORATE-GENERAL

Directorate C - Scientific Opinions

C2 - Management of scientific committees; scientific co-operation and networks

Scientific Committee on Food

SCF/CS/PLEN/MINS/136 Final

4 April 2003

**Minutes of the 136th Plenary Meeting
of the
Scientific Committee on Food**

held on 3/4/5 March 2003 in Brussels

Members/Membres/Mitglieder

Mr. J. ALEXANDER
Mr. A. FLYNN
Mrs. S. BARLOW Vice Chair
Mr. A. CARERE
K-H. ENGEL (present on 3 and 4 March)
W. GRUNOW
Mrs. A. KNAAP Chair
Mr. B. KOLETZKO
Mr. J.C. LARSEN
S. LINDGREN
B. MOSELEY
A. PALOU Vice Chair
W. SARIS (present on 4 and 5 March)
J. SCHLATTER
P. TOBBACK
P. VERGER
J.-M. WAL (present on 4 and 5 March)
R. WALKER

Experts

Mrs. A. MORTENSEN (present on 4 March)
Mr. P. ELIAS (present on 5 March)

Commission/Kommission

(DG Health and Consumer Protection)

Mr. A. KLEPSCH
Mrs. H. LEE
Mr. G. SCHREIBER

Secretariat/Secrétariat/Sekretariat (DG Health and Consumer Protection)

Mrs. T. SÄTERI
Mr. D. LIEM
Mrs. P. RODRIGUEZ IGLESIAS
Mrs. C. HEPPNER
Mr. T. HALLAS-MØLLER
Mrs. H. PEDERSEN

1. WELCOME, APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed the participants. Apologies for absence were received from Professor Timo Hirvi.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted. The chair recalled that the minutes of the 135th Plenary meeting of the SCF were already adopted by written procedure in February 2003.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Professor Ron Walker declared an interest on carrageenan (agenda item 5.3). The Committee considered that Professor Walker could attend during the discussion of this item in the agenda as he only had an indirect interest on carrageenan. He had been a consultant for a company marketing carrageenan but had not been involved with the carrageenan issue.

4. CO-ORDINATION WITH THE SCIENTIFIC STEERING COMMITTEE AND OTHER SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES

The chair informed the Committee about the ongoing activities of the SSC. Considerable progress was noted in the preparation of a guidance document for the risk assessment of genetically modified plants and derived food and feed. A revised draft will be discussed at the meeting of the SSC of 6-7 March.

The Committee was also informed about the outcomes of activities of a Joint Working Group on Verotoxigenic *E. Coli* (VTEC) in foodstuffs of the Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures relating to Public Health and the SCF.

5. FOOD ADDITIVES

5.1. Erythritol

The key issues in the draft opinion on erythritol were presented by the rapporteur and discussed. The draft opinion was adopted subject to incorporation of the changes proposed by the Committee. On behalf of the Committee, the chair expressed

appreciation for the work carried out by the rapporteur and the other members of the Additives Working Group.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex I** of these minutes.

5.2. 4-Hexyl resorcinol

The draft opinion prepared within the Additives Working Group was introduced and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussion by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion as agreed appears as **Annex II** of these minutes.

5.3. Carrageenan

The chair of the Additives Working Group presented the draft opinion. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussion by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex III** of these minutes.

5.4. Beta-carotene from *B. trispora* - extraction solvents

The draft opinion was presented and discussed. The Committee agreed to include additional information on the influence of the proposed use of isopropyl alcohol and isobutyl acetate on the specification for the beta-carotene prepared from *Blakeslea trispora*. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of the changes suggested by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex IV** of these minutes.

5.5 Energy drinks

The draft opinion prepared was presented and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussion by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex V** of these minutes.

6. FOOD CONTACT MATERIALS

6.1. 21st list of monomers and additives for food contact materials

The Chairman of the Food Contact Materials Working Group introduced the draft opinion prepared by the Working Group. The Committee discussed the issue and agreed a number of changes to the draft.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex VI** of these minutes.

6.2. Potential risks from organotin compounds used as catalysts in silicone-coated baking papers

The rapporteur of the Food Contact Materials Working Group introduced the draft opinion prepared by the Working Group. The Committee noted that a risk evaluation of exposure to organotin compounds through food and non-food sources is being prepared by the Scientific Committee on Toxicity, Ecotoxicity and the Environment whereas a Task Force on Organotin Compounds, created by the SCF, is dealing with the health risks from dietary exposure.

The Committee discussed the draft and agreed on a number of changes to the draft. The draft opinion was adopted subject to incorporation of the changes proposed.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex VII** of these minutes.

7. FLAVOURINGS

7.1. Teucrin A

The draft opinion prepared by the Flavourings Working Group was introduced by the rapporteur and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes proposed by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex VIII** of these minutes.

7.2. Smoke flavourings

The Committee received a question from the Commission whether the Report on Smoke Flavourings, as adopted by the Committee on 25 June 1993¹, can still be considered as a valid basis for the safety evaluation of smoke flavourings. The Committee discussed the issue and decided to prepare the following statement.

The Committee is of the opinion that an adequate evaluation of the safety of complex mixtures of substances such as smoke flavourings should be based on sufficient information to assess the exposure and toxicity of the products involved. In the report adopted in 1993 the principles of the toxicological evaluation of smoke flavourings have been clearly outlined. Moreover, the report specifies the technological information - among others on production methods, composition and potential intake - and the core set of toxicological data which are needed for the assessment of the safety of smoke flavourings. The Committee concluded that these requirements can still be considered as valid.

This statement also appears as **Annex IX** to these minutes.

8. TOLERABLE UPPER INTAKE LEVELS FOR VITAMINS AND MINERALS

8.1. Tolerable upper intake level of Zinc

The draft opinion prepared was presented by the chairman of the Task Force on Upper Levels of Vitamins and Minerals and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of the changes suggested by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex X** of these minutes.

8.2. Tolerable upper intake level of Copper

The draft opinion prepared was presented by the chairman of the Task Force on Upper Levels of Vitamins and Minerals and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussion by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex XI** of these minutes.

¹ Scientific Committee for Food (1993). Report on smoke flavourings. Reports of the Scientific Committee for Food (Thirty-fourth series), pp. 1-7.

8.3. Tolerable upper intake level of Chromium. Draft opinion

The discussion of this draft opinion was deferred until the next Plenary meeting of the SCF.

A proposal for a minutes' statement was prepared, addressing the limitations of extrapolating tolerable upper intake levels for children from adult values. In view of time restrictions the discussion on this issue was deferred until the next Plenary meeting.

The Committee noted that the upper level values allocated to zinc and copper differs from the PMTDIs derived by JECFA in 1982 and which were endorsed by the SCF in the context of food contact materials (SCF 33rd report series 1995).

9. NUTRITION

9.1. Revision of essential requirements of infant formulae and follow-on formulae

The chair thanked the Nutrition Working Group for the tremendous efforts put in the preparation of the draft opinion on the revision of essential requirements of infant formulae and follow-on formulae.

In view of the complexity and size of the document the Committee agreed with the chair's proposal to discuss a first part of the document at this Plenary and to discuss the remaining chapters on the basis of a further completed draft at the next Plenary meeting of 2-4 April. The chapters discussed at this meeting were adopted subject to incorporation of the changes suggested by the Committee and they will be published after the next Plenary meeting on April together with the remaining chapters adopted at that meeting.

9.2. Nutrition labelling

The draft opinion prepared was presented and discussed. The document was adopted subject to incorporation of changes as suggested during the discussion by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex XII** of these minutes.

10. NOVEL FOODS AND NOVEL PROCESSES

10.1. Applications for approval of a variety of plant sterol-enriched foods

The draft opinion prepared by the Novel Foods Working Group was introduced and discussed.

The Committee noted that some of the sources of phytosterols/phytostanols have allergenic potential (e.g. peanut, soya) and that some phytosterols/phytostanols may be marketed in formulations containing, for example, peanut oil. The Committee wished to draw the attention of risk managers to the necessity that consumers are informed about this.

During the discussions, the Committee reached agreement on the inclusion of a few modifications to improve the clarity of the text and to ensure consistency with previous opinions of the Committee. The draft opinion was adopted subject to the incorporation of the changes proposed by the Committee.

The text of the full opinion appears as **Annex XIII** of these minutes.

10.2. Food irradiation

The Committee has been asked by the Commission to review its Opinion on the Irradiation of Food of 1986, in the light of new developments. The Committee discussed the issue and decided to prepare the following statement.

Since the Joint FAO/IAEA/WHO Report of 1981 on The Wholesomeness of Irradiated Food and the 1986 Report of the Scientific Committee on Food on the Irradiation of Food, as well as the adoption in 1983 of the Codex General Standard for Irradiated Foods and in 1984 of the Recommended International Code of Practice for the Operation of Radiation Facilities used for the Treatment of Food, only a limited number of studies have been carried out in this field. The toxicological and nutritional database relating to foods irradiated with doses below 10 kGy has not been enlarged to any significant degree while the human clinical studies, although they did not show any adverse effects following the consumption of irradiated foods, are not specific enough to support a general extension of doses up to 10 kGy to any foodstuff. The Committee considered it not possible at present to deviate from its earlier position that only those specific

doses and food classes should be endorsed for which adequate toxicological, nutritional, microbiological and technical data are available.

With respect to high dose irradiation a Joint FAO/IAEA/WHO Study Group published a review in 1999 of all data on the irradiation of foods with doses above 10 kGy to determine whether such foods could be considered wholesome. Again only very limited toxicological studies have been carried out with high dose irradiated foods and none has been provided on any of the convenience foods that have been deep frozen and then irradiated with high doses. As the database for high-dose irradiated foods has only been slightly extended it is not possible for the Committee to recommend a general removal of the upper limit of 10 kGy for the production of safe and wholesome foods, except for dried herbs and spices, which for technological reasons might need up to 30 kGy.

The Committee intends to express a full opinion on this subject at the Plenary meeting in April.

This statement also appears as **Annex XIV** to these minutes.

11. GENERAL INFORMATION BY COMMISSION SERVICES ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE SCF

Not discussed.

12. ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Not discussed.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 137th Plenary meeting of the SCF of 2-4 April 2003

The Committee discussed a draft agenda for the 137th Plenary meeting as prepared by the Secretariat. In view of the considerable number of items on the agenda, the Committee agreed to start the meeting on the first meeting day (2 April) at 10:00 hr.

14. ADOPTION OF THESE MINUTES

These minutes were adopted at the 137th Plenary Meeting of the SCF of 2-4 April 2003.

ANNEXES

(The text of the opinions appear in the section outcome/opinions and the text of the minutes' statements appear in the section outcome/minutes of the web page of the SCF on the Internet)

ANNEX I

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on Erythritol (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/ADD/EDUL/215 Final.

ANNEX II

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on 4-Hexylresorcinol (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/ADD/CONS/50 Final.

ANNEX III

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on Carrageenan (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/ADD/EMU/199 Final.

ANNEX IV

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the safety in use of isopropyl alcohol and isobutyl acetate for the extraction of beta-carotene from *Blakeslea trispora* (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/ADD/COL/173 Final.

ANNEX V

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on additional information on "energy" drinks (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/PLEN/ENDRINKS/16 Final.

ANNEX VI

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the 21st additional list of monomers and additives for food contact materials (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/PM/GEN/M93 Final.

ANNEX VII

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the potential risks from organotin compounds used as catalysts in silicone-coated baking papers (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/PM/4072 Final.

ANNEX VIII

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on Teucrin A, major component of hydroalcoholic extracts of *Teucrium chamaedrys* (wild germander) (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/FLAV/FLAVOUR/18 Final.

ANNEX IX

Minutes' statement of the Scientific Committee on Food on smoke flavourings (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/FLAV/FLAVOUR/46 Final.

ANNEX X

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the Tolerable Upper Intake Level of Zinc (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/NUT/UPPLEV/62 Final.

ANNEX XI

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the Tolerable Upper Intake Level of Copper (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/NUT/UPPLEV/57 Final.

ANNEX XII

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on the revision of reference values for nutrition labelling (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/NUT/GEN/18 Final.

ANNEX XIII

Opinion of the Scientific Committee on Food on applications for approval of a variety of plant sterol-enriched foods (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/NF/DOS/15 Final.

ANNEX XIV

Minutes' statement of the Scientific Committee on Food on food irradiation (expressed on 5 March 2003). SCF/CS/NF/IRR/29 Final.