

Summary record of the meeting of the Scientific Committee on Animal Health and Animal Welfare held on 21 March 2000 in Brussels adopted 27 June 2000

List of Participants

MEMBERS

Dr. R. Ahl, Dr. D. Alexander, Prof. J. Badiola Diez, Prof. D. Broom, Dr. R. Dantzer, Dr. F. Garrido-Abellan (Chairman), Dr. M. Gunn, Prof. Dr. J. Hartung, Prof. P. Jensen, Dr. P. Le Neindre, Prof. Dr. V. Moennig, Dr. D. B. Morton, Prof. J. Noordhuizen, Prof. G. Panina, Prof. A-L. Parodi, Prof. Dr. J. van Oirschot, Dr. E. Vanopdenbosch, Prof. M.Verga

COMMISSION

Dr. J. Moynagh, Dr. G. Morosetti

APOLOGIES

Prof. S. Alexandersen

1. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as proposed.

2. Adoption of the record of the meeting of 8 December 1999

The minutes of the meeting were adopted with a few minor amendments.

3. Declarations of interest

No member reported any conflicts of interest relating to the items under discussion.

4. Report from the Sub-Committee on Animal Welfare (Dr. Le Neindre)

Dr. Le Neindre reported on the activities of the Sub-committee on Animal Welfare. Meetings of the animal welfare sub-committee were held on 21 February and 3 March. Both meetings discussed the draft on "The welfare of chickens kept for meat production (broilers)" prepared by the working group, which had met for the final time on 1.and 2. February 2000. Following the second meeting the Sub-committee approved the revised draft. The document is on the agenda for discussion and possible adoption by the Committee.

4.1. Working Groups on new questions:

The Welfare of Animals kept for fur production.

This newly established WG will have its first meeting on 23 March. This is likely to be a major report and will take several meetings of the working group to complete. The working group is chaired by Dr Dantzer.

The Welfare of Fattening Cattle

A working group has been established under the chairmanship of Dr Le Neindre.

5. Report from the Sub-Committee on Animal Health (Dr. Ahl)

Dr. Ahl reported on the activities of the Sub-committee on Animal Health.

A meeting of the Sub-committee on Animal Health was held on 22 February 2000. The document on "Possible links between Crohn's disease in man and paratuberculosis in animals" prepared by the working group was the main item on the agenda. The Sub-committee approved the document following a number of amendments.

5.1. Progress report of Working Groups:

Inactivation of viruses in blood

The document was not discussed at the meeting of the subcommittee because of lack of time. It will be discussed at the next meeting.

B. melitensis

The WG met on 23 February and will probably have its next meeting on 12 April 2000.

5.2. New Questions

A number of new questions have been put to the Committee on animal health matters. These concerned questions on Avian Influenza (assigned to Dr. Alexander), Bluetongue (assigned to Prof. Moennig), Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (assigned to Prof. Noordhuisen), Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis (assigned to Dr Vanopdenbosch) and Infectious Salmon Anaemia (assigned to Prof van Oirschot). The questions on Avian Influenza and Bluetongue are particularly relevant to current animal health problems in the EU (Italy and Greece respectively) and are therefore urgent.

6. Discussion and possible adoption by the Committee of a report on Possible Links between Paratuberculosis in Animals and Crohn's Disease in man (Rapporteur Prof. Badiola Diez)

The rapporteur made a detailed presentation of this report explaining the common and the different aspects of both diseases and the results of various experimental attempts to determine whether a link existed between these two conditions. He reported that there was considerable difficulty of giving a definite answer to the question of the mandate because of the absence of conclusive data and also because of the presence of conflicting data. The Committee unanimously adopted the report with some modifications.

7. Discussion and possible adoption by the Committee of a report on The Welfare of Chickens kept for Meat Production (Rapporteur Prof. Jensen)

The rapporteur presented the report giving a short summary of the different sections and chapters. Members noted that this (as with the earlier report on paratuberculosis and Crohn's disease) was a major achievement involving considerable work by the working group and the rapporteur. Following a detailed discussion, the report was adopted unanimously with some modifications.

8. Miscellaneous

8.1. Steering Committee

The Chairman reported to the Committee on recent developments in the Steering Committee and in particular that they discussed the White Paper on Food Safety and the proposed new European Food Authority.

8.2. Transport of exotic animals

One member requested that the Commission consider the possibility of the Committee examining the animal welfare implications involved in the transport of exotic animals. This was a matter which have been discussed previously by the Animal Welfare Section of the former Scientific Veterinary Committee. A report had not been adopted on that occasion. The secretariat undertook to report back to the committee.

The meeting closed at 17.00h