

codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE
ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



JOINT OFFICE: Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100 ROME Tel: 39 06 57051 www.codexalimentarius.net Email: codex@fao.org Facsimile: 39 06 5705 4593

Agenda Item 2 (b)

CX/AF 04/5/3
April 2004

JOINT FAO/WHO FOOD STANDARDS PROGRAMME

AD-HOC INTERGOVERNMENTAL CODEX TASK FORCE ON ANIMAL FEEDING

Fifth Session

Copenhagen, Denmark, 17 – 19 May 2004

REPORT ON FAO, WHO AND OIE ACTIVITIES

FAO

In the FAO Programme of Work and Budget 2004-5, there is a Programme Entity entitled Veterinary Public Health and Food and Feed Safety. This includes a Major Output entitled: Food safety measures and the application of quality control along the "stable to table" process. Activities are: A global information portal on animal source foods and food and feed safety; Guidelines on safety in the food chain and quality control mechanisms for primary production, animal feed and the milk and meat industries; National and regional capacity building for implementation of guidelines for safe animal feeding, milk and meat hygiene; and Risk analysis tools and mechanisms developed to ensure biosecurity with respect to animal health and life, public health and the environment

FAO is developing guidelines for Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) along the food-chain in the context of Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (SARD). At this effect, an Expert Consultation was held in Rome from 10 to 12 November 2003, to obtain advice on the relevance, validity and next steps of the proposed Good Agricultural Practices Approach. Participants discussed examples of application and methodology of a GAP Approach based on stakeholder priorities with a focus on particularly in developing country settings. The meeting resulted in initial strategies for implementing the GAP approach and the design of several pilot activities for testing the approach. There has been a joint initiative with EMBRAPA, Brazil, to define GAPs for a number of animal production systems within selected agro-ecosystems which resulted in a publication.

FAO presented its Strategy for a Food Chain Approach to Food Safety and Quality during the Seventeenth Session of its Committee on Agriculture (COAG), held in March/April 2003. In discussing the document, the COAG generally acknowledged the importance of addressing food safety issues along the food chain and recognized the important role of the agriculture sector in contributing to the safety of food supply. It provided further guidance on the key policy elements that need to be covered in the document and requested FAO Secretariat to revise and resubmit the document for examination by COAG at its following session.

FAO organized jointly with the International Feed Industry Federation (IFIF) a Food-Feed Safety Conference. The meeting, held in Rome, from 29 to 31 October 2004, covered also topics such as Veterinary Public Health, new developments in TSEs, sourcing safe feed materials, harmonization of assurance schemes, etc.

Also jointly with, FAO organized a Seminar on Feed Safety in Africa, in connection with the Animal Feed Manufacturer Association Forum (AFMA). The Seminar, held on the 9 March in Sun City, South Africa, saw the participation of government officers and private sector representatives from many countries in the region.

Again in March 2004, FAO organized jointly with the International Dairy Federation (IDF) an International Symposium on Dairy Hygiene and Safety, in Cape Town (South Africa), where issues like feed safety and the application of HACCP in the production and handling of feed were also tackled.

Other regional/sub-regional workshops on Food and Feed Safety will also be organized throughout the course of the year in Bangkok (Thailand), Cairo (Egypt) and Tunis (Tunisia). In particular, the Workshop in Tunisia, planned for September 2004, will focus on Good Practices for the Poultry Sector in Northern Africa and will address issues like the application of good practices in the production of poultry feed.

The Report and Proceedings of the Expert Consultation and Workshop on Alternative Protein Sources for the Animal Feed Industry held in Bangkok, 29 April-3 May 2002 with support from IFIF, have been published in October 2003. The proceedings are also available on-line at the web-site¹.

An FAO publication is in press on "Assessing the quality and safety of animal feeds". FAO is also planning to release a Manual of Good Practices for the Feed Industry and to define Guidelines for Trade in Animal Feed. The purpose of the Manual is to provide updated comprehensive information and practical guidelines for the implementation of the new Code, when adopted by the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

In January 2004, FAO published also, jointly with IDF, a Guide to Good Dairy Farming Practice, where specific sections are dedicated to animal feeding.

Finally, as a result of the conclusions of the Joint First FAO/OIE/WHO Expert Workshop on Non-human Antimicrobial Usage and Antimicrobial Resistance, held in Geneva from 1 to 5 December 2003 and of the Joint FAO/OIE/WHO 2nd Workshop on Non-human Antimicrobial Usage and Antimicrobial Resistance: Management Options, held in Oslo from 15 to 18 March 2004, FAO is preparing the publication of a Manual on the Prudent use of Antimicrobials in Animal Production.

FAO is finalizing a Memorandum of Understanding with IFIF with a view to ensure co-operation by consultation, co-ordination of efforts, mutual assistance and joint action in fields of common interest.

In December 2003, an Agreement between OIE and FAO was also signed. The Agreement specifically mentions how the "joint development of international standards relating to those aspects in animal production which impact on food safety" is object of joint action. FAO remains primarily responsible for the establishment of guidelines and recommendations on good agricultural practices relevant to the management of animal diseases and zoonoses and for the establishment of international food safety standards, guidelines and other recommendations through the FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission.

FAO (Animal Production and Health Division) continues to provide extensive information on animal feeds and feeding through its Animal Feed Resources Information System (AFRIS)² on the Internet, and associated publications and documents. In particular, it also continues to provide official information from international and national organizations on feed utilization and safety, contaminants, anti-microbial resistance, BSE and transboundary zoonotic diseases, etc. through its Food and Feed Safety Gateway³. This has been further developed as the Veterinary Public Health website as a focal point for information for veterinarians and public health professionals⁴.

¹ <http://www.fao.org/livestock/workshop/feed/faoc2002.htm>

² <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGA/AGAP/FRG/afri/default.htm>

³ <http://www.fao.org/livestock/AGAP/FRG/Feedsafety/feedsafety.htm>

⁴ <http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/A6.html>

FAO continues to work with countries world-wide through its Technical Cooperation Programmes (TCP) and General Cooperation Programmes (GCP). It provides comprehensive technical assistance to improve feed safety and particularly to address risk management for such issues as BSE, feed-borne infections, and feed contamination. FAO also continues assisting with the development of the feed industry, feed information and utilization of locally available feed resources. A regional project for the implementation of good practices for feed production in Southern and Eastern African countries is in preparation. Projects are being implemented for capacity building for surveillance and prevention of BSE and other zoonotic diseases. They include elements of risk analysis, surveillance and diagnosis, as well as training in the feed and meat industries. In particular, in the framework of the project for “Capacity building for surveillance and prevention for BSE and other Zoonotic diseases” in Serbia and South Africa, the production of a training manual and other material and the implementation of training on feed safety is under way. Also within the activities of a similar project addressing the Latin American region a Manual on the effect of the application of safety measures (GMP, HACCP, etc.) to feed production on BSE prevention was produced.

FAO/WHO/OIE

Non-human use of Antimicrobials and Antimicrobial Resistance

At its 53rd session in 2001, the Codex Executive Committee requested FAO and WHO, in collaboration with OIE, to give advice to Codex on non-human antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance. It was suggested that issues related to antimicrobials, raised by several Codex Committees, requires a more general, multidisciplinary and multi-agency response. It was also suggested that the outcome of the FAO/WHO/OIE process should include describing possible future directions for this work.

In considering a reply to this request FAO, WHO and OIE considered 1) that the advice needed by Codex would include risk assessment issues as well as risk management implications and 2) that the outcome would have implications not only for Codex work, but also for other standard setting work in OIE, FAO and WHO. Therefore - in accordance with Codex Risk analysis principles - it was decided to separate the considerations in two workshops, i.e. a 1st workshop on scientific issues and a 2nd workshop on management options. The 1st Workshop in Geneva, December 2003 conducted a preliminary scientific assessment considering all non-human uses of antimicrobials in animals (including aquaculture) and plants, and their role in antimicrobial resistance; the workshop was only attended by independent scientists selected after evaluation of their CVs by a panel composed of representatives from FAO, OIE and WHO and external independent reviewers. Based on the outcome of this Workshop the 2nd Workshop in Oslo, March 2004 considered the broad range of possible risk management options. All major stakeholder groups (e.g., pharmaceutical industry, farmers⁵, food processors, consumers, regulatory agencies) participated in this 2nd meeting.

The combined outcome of the two workshops represents the consultative effort by the three Organizations involved and is hoped to be a relevant and timely input for the official standard setting process of Codex. Furthermore, the outcome should also be of interest to FAO, OIE and WHO for planning their own future activities in dealing with this multi-sectoral issue.

The workshop process resulted in two reports representing a coherent picture describing both risk assessment and risk management considerations. It was stated that Antimicrobial agents are essential drugs for human and animal health and welfare and that Antimicrobial resistance is a global public and animal health concern that is impacted by both human and non-human antimicrobial usage. Antimicrobial agents are used in food animals, aquaculture, companion animals and horticulture to treat or prevent disease and sometimes used in food animals to promote growth. The risks associated with non-human antimicrobial use and antimicrobial resistance should be part of the human safety assessment.

The workshop process has resulted in suggestions for a recommended way forward in this area, for Codex, as well as for OIE, WHO and FAO. Amongst the important conclusions were:

Through adoption of Good Agricultural Practices including good animal husbandry and good veterinary practices it is possible to reduce the necessity for antimicrobials, and the need for rapid implementation by governments and all stakeholders of the WHO Global Principles for Prudent Use of Antimicrobials and the OIE Guidelines should be recognized.

⁵ In the context of this report, farmers include individuals, groups and companies involved in food production.

While the issues related to the residues of antimicrobials in food have been dealt with efficiently both nationally and internationally, issues related to antimicrobial resistance related to non-human use of antibiotics represent a recognized challenge. A Codex/OIE Task Force should be established to develop broad Risk management options for antimicrobial resistance related to non-human use of antimicrobials. In addition, the International Code of Practice, General Principles of Food Hygiene should be reviewed to take account of antimicrobial resistance issues. The task force should also re-review and consolidate existing documents on AMR, as well as documents under development, in an attempt to eliminate redundancies.

The concept of “critically important” classes of antibiotics for people should be developed by WHO. A similar list of “critically important” classes of antibiotics for animals should be pursued by OIE. The analysis of the overlap of these critical lists will provide further information so that an appropriate balance may be struck between animal health needs and public health considerations. The concept of “thresholds of resistance” should be pursued as a tool for risk management enabling a range of risk management actions if the thresholds are exceeded.

There is need for capacity building, networking and co-ordination to facilitate implementation of surveillance programmes in various countries, in particular developing countries. FAO, WHO and OIE should take a leading role in this.

The outcome of the consultative process described will be discussed in detail at the Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting in June 2004 in Geneva, based on the full publication and distribution of both reports to all Member States.

OIE

OIE activities on matters related to Animal Feeding:

The OIE informed the Task Force that discussions on the collaboration between Codex Alimentarius and the OIE were renewed during a recent meeting with the new Chairman of the CAC. Dr. Slorak was invited to join the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety (APFS WG) which is to meet in April 2004.

The OIE intends to have Chapters in the Terrestrial Animal Health Code that will make reference to relevant work of the Codex Alimentarius on meat hygiene and other food safety areas.

The APFS WG has been developing documents dealing with the duality of objectives (food safety and animal health) during ante- and post-mortem inspection. During its July 2003 meeting, the APFS WG reviewed and modified a draft document entitled: “Role and functionality of Veterinary Services in food safety throughout the food chain” which was circulated to all OIE Member Countries for comment, and for further discussion at the May 2004 General Session. A second document on “Good Farming Practices in the Food Safety Continuum”, as well as a third one on the role of Veterinary Services during ante- and post-mortem inspection are under preparation and will be discussed during the upcoming April meeting of the WG.