Codex Alimentarius: Veterinary Drugs

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Scientific advice for Codex MRLs

- Scientific advice (risk assessment) for Codex work on residues of veterinary drugs in foods is provided by the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA), an independent scientific expert body convened by FAO/WHO. Latest (70th) meeting October 2008

- Risk analysis principles applied by the Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) and the Risk assessment policy for setting maximum limits for residues (MRLs) of veterinary drugs in foods can be found in the Codex Procedural Manual
JECFA evaluations

- JECFA establishes **Acceptable Daily Intakes** for man (ADIs) for veterinary drugs and also recommends **Maximum Residue Limits** (MRLs) for residues of veterinary drugs in foods of animal origin.

- In deriving MRLs from the ADI for a veterinary drug, JECFA takes into account the total amount of potentially active residues and a conservative theoretical food basket that consists of 300g muscle, 100g liver, 50g kidney, 50g fat, 1500g milk, 100g for eggs and 20g for honey.
JECFA evaluations (cont.)

JECFA may recommend

- an MRL or a temporary MRL
- MRL unnecessary or not specified (situations with a wide margin of safety or taking into consideration endogenous levels of the compound)
- no MRL recommend (JECFA does not support the use of the drug for food-producing animals (e.g. malachite green) or significant deficiencies in residue or method data)
Development of Codex standards

- Codex Committee Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Foods (CCRVDF) prepares draft standards (MRLs) based on JECFA recommendations, guidelines, codes of practice, etc. through a 5/8 step procedure for submission to the CAC for adoption
- Draft standards, etc. are circulated to governments and other interested parties for comments
- Standards, etc. are adopted by the CAC and then added to the Codex Alimentarius
The responsibilities of the CCRVDF, which is hosted by the USA, are to
• determine priorities for the consideration of residues of veterinary drugs in foods
• recommend MRLs for such veterinary drugs
• develop codes of practice as required
• consider methods of sampling and analysis for the determination of veterinary drug residues in foods

Next meeting (18th Session) of the CCRVDF will be held in Natal, Brazil, 11-15 May 2009
Codex MRLs for veterinary drugs

- To date the CAC has adopted 481 MRLs covering 51 veterinary drugs or groups of veterinary drugs
- Codex MRLs for veterinary drugs can be found on the Codex web site ([www.codexalimentarius.net](http://www.codexalimentarius.net)), where they can be listed by substance, tissue/food and animal species.
- CCRVDF has developed a *Compendium of methods of analysis identified as suitable to support Codex MRLs* (not a Codex text)
Controversial issues

- MRLs for hormones used for growth promotion adopted at CAC in 1995 by small (33/29) majority (USA, Canada for, EU against). EU prohibition on import of beef from hormone-treated animals led to WTO-challenge by USA & Canada and the imposition of punitive import duties on some EU foods exported to the USA and Canada
- Bovine somatotropin
- Residues of veterinary drugs without an ADI/MRL.
Codex Codes of Practice

In addition to MRLs, the CAC has also adopted

- *Guidelines for the establishment of a regulatory programme for control of veterinary drug residues in foods* (CAC/GL 16-1993) (currently under revision – the revised text will also supersede CAC/RCP 38-1993)
- *Glossary of terms and definitions (veterinary drug residues in foods)* (CAC/MISC 5-1993)
Antimicrobial resistance (1)

- Extensive cooperation between FAO, OIE and WHO on the question of antimicrobial resistance.
- Joint FAO/OIE/WHO Expert Meeting on Critically Important Antimicrobials, 26-29 November 2007
- CAC has adopted a *Code of practice to minimize and contain antimicrobial resistance* (CAC/RCP 61-2005), which was developed by CCRVDF and is consistent with OIE text
Antimicrobial resistance (2)

- Codex \textit{ad hoc} Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (TFAMR) was established in 2007 and is hosted by Korea
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} Session of TFAMR (Oct. 2008) agreed to consolidate three Codex documents (on risk assessment, risk profiles and risk management guidelines to contain foodborne antimicrobial resistant organisms) into a single document entitled “Proposed draft guidelines for risk analysis of foodborne antimicrobial resistance”. Revised version to be considered at next session.
OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code

Section 6. Veterinary Public Health contains, among other texts

• Ch. 6.7 Responsible and prudent use of antimicrobial agents in veterinary medicine

• Ch. 6.8 Risk assessment of antimicrobial resistance arising from the use of antimicrobial agents in animals
Cooperation between OIE and Codex

- OIE participates actively in the work of the CCRVDF and provides at each CCRVDF session a report of the relevant activities of the OIE and VICH (International Cooperation on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Veterinary Medicinal Products)
Further information

- Web site: www.codexalimentarius.net
- Codex Contact Point in each Member State
- JECFA risk assessments can be found via www.who.int and www.fao.org
- OIE web site: www.oie.int