The OIE ad hoc Group on Zoonotic Parasites (the ad hoc Group) met at OIE Headquarters in Paris on 23 – 25 July 2012.

The members of the ad hoc Group and other participants are listed at Annex I. The Agenda adopted is at Annex II.

Dr Alex Thiermann, President of the Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission, on behalf of Dr Vallat, OIE Director General, welcomed members to this meeting of the ad hoc Group who are undertaking important work in the development of the first Terrestrial Animal Health Code (Terrestrial Code) chapter with the objective to recommend scientific measures to mitigate human health risks arising from animals. He also welcomed the two Co-chairs of the Codex Working Group on Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites, who had been invited in response to some Member Countries request that the OIE work in close collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Commission on the development of this standard. Dr Thiermann said that the participation of the Co-chairs will provide a good opportunity for the OIE and Codex to work closely together on the development of respective standards on Trichinella and ensure alignment of risk-based recommendations while avoiding duplication of effort, overlap and gaps.

Later in the day Dr Vallat joined the meeting and welcomed members and thanked them for their support of this important work. Dr Vallat explained the background of the very efficient collaboration between the OIE and Codex since 2002. Dr Vallat emphasised that the OIE procedures for developing and updating the OIE Codes are responsive, transparent and rapid. He noted that new and revised texts are usually adopted (i.e. approved by the World Assembly of Delegates) after a two year cycle of development and revision. Importantly, the procedures provide a basis for continuous improvement to standards as new scientific information comes to light, and for ‘fast track’ adoption of new standards when Member Countries need to address important new risks to human and animal health on an urgent basis. He added that in order to receive the endorsement from Members, the first version of the chapter should focus on main objectives and desired outcomes.

1. Update on relevant Codex work

Dr Hathaway, co-chair of the Codex Working Group on Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites provided and update on the relevant Codex work. The Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (CCFH) commenced work on control of Trichinella species and Taenia saginata, at its 42nd Session in 2010. The 43rd Session of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene (2011) considered draft Guidelines for Control of Specific Zoonotic Parasites and established an Electronic Working Group to continue work in 2012, bearing in mind the parallel work in OIE and the need for an integrated risk-based approach to development of controls.
The report of the CCFH Electronic Working Group (August, 2012) and the redrafted guidelines strongly recognised the importance of a risk-based approach to control Trichinella in meat that takes into account the complete farm-to-plate continuum. Maximising the use of slaughterhouse information in the development of on-farm and food chain controls is an important aspect.

Dr Hathaway, on behalf of the CCFH thanked the OIE for the opportunity to continue the close collaboration between the two organisations in progressing this work.

2. **Consider Member comments on draft Chapter 8.13. Trichinellosis and amend text as appropriate**

The ad hoc Group considered comments received from Argentina, Australia, Canada, the EU, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and the USA, as well as Organismo Internacional Regional de Sanidad Agropecuaria (OIRSA) and amended the text as appropriate.

The broad range of comments from Members resulted in the ad hoc Group making a significant revision of the draft chapter including restructuring and simplification. The ad hoc Group noted that as a consequence of this action many Member comments became redundant. In response to several Member comments that the text was highly prescriptive in places, the ad hoc Group amended the text where relevant to be more outcome based.

The ad hoc Group wished to note that this chapter provides recommendation for on-farm prevention of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs (*Sus scrofa domesticus*), and safe trade of meat and meat products derived from suids and equids. The ad hoc Group amended the section on ‘General Provisions’ to reflect that the importance of trichinellosis lies in the risk posed to humans and costs of control in slaughter populations rather than a risk to animal health. Hence, the provisions developed in this chapter reflect the need to minimise exposure of the domestic pig population to sources of *Trichinella*. The provisions also emphasise the role of the Veterinary Authority in assuring that domestic pigs are reared under controlled management conditions.

In response to several Member comments, the term ‘*Trichinella*-free’ was amended to ‘negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection’ because the determination of a ‘free’ status is not feasible given the sensitivity of currently available tests and the limited statistical power of most surveillance data.

Moreover, following overall evaluation of Member comments, the ad hoc Group decided to focus this chapter on requirements for establishing a ‘negligible risk compartment’ because there is a clear and objective means of establishing this status in pigs kept under controlled management conditions. In comparison the ad hoc Group recognised the difficulties of establishing a country or zone status because of the lack of clear and objective means of achieving such a status, notably in terms of biosecurity and surveillance for pigs not kept under controlled management conditions. For these reasons the chapter only addresses a compartment with a negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions.

This chapter provides recommendations for ensuring the biosecurity of this domestic pig subpopulation under varying epidemiological situations in different countries. By focusing on the objective of minimising the potential for transmission of *Trichinella* to pigs, flexibility can be provided in creating what constitutes controlled management conditions. The ad hoc Group noted that the controlled management conditions can be applied to a variety of rearing systems as long as an appropriate level of biosecurity is reached.

Measures recommended to prevent infection in domestic pig herds kept under controlled management conditions can lead to a status of negligible risk being granted to a compartment comprising a number of herds. Once this has been established, further testing does not provide any additional assurance. In establishing a negligible risk compartment, the ad hoc Group concluded that surveillance of wildlife and feral pigs in the country is not necessary, except for information gathering or to fulfil other obligations.

The ad hoc Group did not consider inclusion of the use of serology as a detection method since a validated test is not available. The ad hoc Group wished to emphasise that official recognition of pig herds as being under controlled management conditions and official recognition of a compartment as having negligible risk does not require serology as a surveillance method.
In response to several Member comments on the introduction of pigs into a negligible risk compartment or herd, the revised Article 8.13.3. requires that introduced pigs should originate from herds officially recognised as being under controlled management conditions or from a compartment officially recognised as having a negligible risk. As stated above, individual serological testing is not a valid option.

As part of the restructuring of this chapter, the ad hoc Group incorporated relevant text from the Article on Surveillance into other articles rather than retaining it as a separate article.

The ad hoc Group did not include an article on negligible risk of Trichinella infection in equids in a country, zone or compartment because of insufficient scientific knowledge to establish criteria for controlled management conditions, a necessary prerequisite.

In response to a comment proposing to delete all articles on international trade and replace them by a global cross reference to Codex Guidelines, the ad hoc Group considered it essential to retain articles dealing with international trade of meat and meat products of suids and equids in this chapter as it was in the remit of its terms of reference. The chapter provides recommendations to OIE Member Countries in that respect. The ad hoc Group noted that the articles include a cross reference to the relevant Codex Guidelines.

2.1. Alignment of OIE and Codex texts on trichinellosis

This draft chapter proposes that one of the criteria for establishing a negligible risk compartment is the availability of appropriate surveillance data. Codex now has the opportunity to develop quantitative linkages between the maximum prevalence of infection that may be present in compartments recognised as having negligible risk (according to surveillance data with different statistical power) and the subsequent risks to human health.

2.2. Revised Chapter 8.13.

Due to the extensive modification and restructuring of the previous draft text, the International Trade Department decided to present this text as a clean document (i.e. without track changes), which should be read with the above text which explains the changes made by the ad hoc Group.

The revised Chapter 8.13. is presented in Annex III.
Annex I

MEETING OF THE OIE AD HOC GROUP ON ZOONOTIC PARASITES

Paris, 23–25 July 2012

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OIE ad hoc Group on Zoonotic Parasites / July 2012
Annex I (contd)

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MEETING OF THE OIE AD HOC GROUP ON ZOONOTIC PARASITES
Paris (France), 23–25 July 2012

Adopted agenda

Welcome

1. Update on relevant Codex work.

2. Consider Member comments on draft Chapter 8.13. Trichinellosis and amend text as appropriate.

3. Draft a report of the ad hoc Group meeting.

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CHAPTER 8.13.

INFECTION WITH TRICHINELLA SPP.

Article 8.13.1.

General provisions

Trichinosis is a widely distributed zoonosis caused by eating raw or undercooked meat from Trichinella-infected food animals or wildlife. Given that clinical signs of trichinosis are not generally recognised in animals, the importance of trichinosis lies exclusively in the risk posed to humans and costs of control in slaughter populations.

The adult parasite and the larval forms live in the small intestine and muscles (respectively) of many mammalian, avian and reptile host species. Within the genus Trichinella, twelve genotypes have been identified, nine of which have been designated as species. There is geographical variation amongst the genotypes.

Prevention of infection in susceptible species of domestic animals intended for human consumption relies on the prevention of exposure of those animals to the meat and meat products of Trichinella-infected animals. This includes consumption of food waste of domestic animal origin, rodents and wildlife.

Meat and meat products derived from wildlife should always be considered a potential source of infection for humans. Therefore untested meat and meat products of wildlife may pose a public health risk.

For the purposes of the Terrestrial Code, Trichinella infection is defined as an infection of suids or equids by parasites of the genus Trichinella.

This chapter provides recommendations for on-farm prevention of Trichinella infection in domestic pigs (Sus scrofa domesticus), and safe trade of meat and meat products derived from suids and equids. This chapter should be read in conjunction with the Codex Alimentarius Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005).

Methods for the detection of Trichinella infection in pigs and other animal species include direct demonstration of Trichinella larvae in muscle samples. Demonstration of the presence of Trichinella-specific circulating antibodies using a validated serological test may be useful for epidemiological purposes.

When authorising the import or transit of the commodities covered in this chapter, with the exception of those listed in Article 8.13.2., Veterinary Authorities should apply the recommendations in this chapter.

Standards for diagnostic tests are described in the Terrestrial Manual.

Article 8.13.2.

Safe commodities

When authorising the import or transit of the following commodities, Veterinary Authorities should not require any Trichinella related conditions, regardless of the status of the animal population of the exporting country or zone:

1. hides, skins, hair and bristles;
2. semen, embryos and oocytes.
Annex III (contd)

Article 8.13.3.

Measures to prevent infection in domestic pig herds kept under controlled management conditions

1. Prevention of *infection* is dependent on minimising exposure to potential sources of *Trichinella*:
   
a) facilities and the surrounding environment should be managed to prevent exposure of pigs to rodents and *wildlife*;

b) raw food waste of animal origin should not be present at the farm level;

c) feed should comply with the requirements in Chapter 6.3. and should be stored in a manner to prevent access by rodents and *wildlife*;

d) a rodent control programme should be in place;

e) dead *animals* should be immediately disposed of in accordance with provisions of Chapter 4.12.;

f) introduced pigs should originate from *herds* officially recognised as being under controlled management conditions as described in point 2, or from *herds* of a *compartment* with a negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection, as described in Article 8.13.5.

2. The *Veterinary Authority* may officially recognise pig *herds* as being under controlled management conditions if:

a) all management practices described in point 1 are complied with and recorded;

b) at least two visits, a minimum of 6 months apart, have been made in the 12 months preceding recognition to verify compliance with good management practices described in point 1;

c) a subsequent programme of audits is conducted.

Article 8.13.4.

Prerequisite criteria for the establishment of a compartment with a negligible risk of *Trichinella* infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions

A *compartment* with a negligible risk of *Trichinella infection* in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions can only be established if the following criteria are met in the country, as applicable:

1. *Trichinella infection* in all species of susceptible *animals* is notifiable in the whole territory and communication procedures on the occurrence of *Trichinella infection* is established between the *Veterinary Authority* and the Public Health Authority;

2. the *Veterinary Authority* has current knowledge of, and authority over, all domestic pigs;

3. the *Veterinary Authority* has current knowledge of the distribution of susceptible species of *wildlife*;

4. an *animal identification* and *traceability* system for domestic pigs is implemented in accordance with the provisions of Chapters 4.1. and 4.2.;
5. appropriate provisions are in place for tracing of meat from wild animals harvested for human consumption;

6. surveillance appropriate to the assessed epidemiological situation and capable of detecting the presence of Trichinella infection (including genotype, if relevant) in domestic pigs and exposure pathways, is in place.

Article 8.13.5.

Compartment with a negligible risk of Trichinella infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions

A compartment may be officially recognised as having negligible risk of Trichinella infection in domestic pigs kept under controlled management conditions if the following conditions are met:

1. all herds of the compartment comply with requirements in Article 8.13.3.;

2. the criteria described in Article 8.13.4. have been complied with for at least 24 months;

3. the absence of Trichinella infection in the compartment has been demonstrated by a surveillance programme. The choice of design, including duration, prevalence and confidence levels should be based on the prevailing, or historical, epidemiological situation, as appropriate, in accordance with Chapter 1.4. and using tests described in the Terrestrial Manual;

4. once a compartment is established, a subsequent programme of audits of all herds within the compartment is in place to ensure compliance with Article 8.13.3.;

5. if the audit identified a lack of compliance with one or more of the criteria described in Article 8.13.3. and the Veterinary Authority determined this to be a significant breach of biosecurity, the herd(s) concerned should be removed from the compartment until compliance is re-established.

Article 8.13.6.

Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of domestic pigs

Veterinary Authorities of importing countries should require the presentation of an international veterinary certificate attesting that the entire consignment of meat or meat products:

1. has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

2. either:
   a) comes from domestic pigs originating from a compartment with a negligible risk for Trichinella infection in accordance with Article 8.13.5.;

   OR

   b) comes from domestic pigs that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of Trichinella larvae, as described in the Terrestrial Manual;

   OR

   c) was processed to ensure the inactivation of Trichinella larvae in accordance with Codex recommendations [under study].
Annex III (contd)

Article 8.13.7.

**Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of wild or feral pigs**

*Veterinary Authorities of importing countries* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat or meat products*:

1. has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

2. either:
   a) comes from *wild or feral* pigs that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae, as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*;

   OR

   b) was processed to ensure the inactivation of *Trichinella* larvae in accordance with Codex recommendations [under study].

Article 8.13.8.

**Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of domestic equids**

*Veterinary Authorities of importing countries* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat or meat products*:

1. has been produced in accordance with the Codex Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat (CAC/RCP 58-2005);

AND

2. comes from *domestic equids* that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*.

Article 8.13.9.

**Recommendations for the importation of meat or meat products of wild and feral equids**

*Veterinary Authorities of importing countries* should require the presentation of an *international veterinary certificate* attesting that the entire consignment of *meat or meat products*:

1. has been inspected in accordance with the provisions in Chapter 6.2;

AND

2. comes from *wild or feral* equids that tested negative by the digestion method for the detection of *Trichinella* larvae as described in the *Terrestrial Manual*. 