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REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE OIE WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL PRODUCTION FOOD SAFETY

Rome (Italy), 8-9 July 2003

(Extract from the December 2003 meeting of the
OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission)

The OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety held its second meeting at the FAO Headquarters in Rome from 8-9 July 2003.

The members of the OIE Working Group and other participants are listed in [Appendix I](#); apologies were received from Dr Coulibaly. The Agenda adopted is given in [Appendix II](#).

Coordination with Codex work

The Working Group agreed that Dr Bill James (representing the Chair of the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene) would participate as an observer and report back to that Committee on the Working Group discussions, to enhance cooperation on work programmes. Mr Billy advised that the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene may be adjourned in 2004 and that the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene could be the prime contact for the Working Group within Codex. The Working Group noted that the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene will have prime input into the agenda of the Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Microbiological Risk Assessment (JEMRA).

It was also noted that much of the Codex technical work was done outside Codex Committees and that there may be some benefit in having these technical experts attending relevant sessions of Working Group meetings.

Discussions at recent OIE and CAC fora

The Chair reported on his presentation at the OIE General Session (May 2003) and noted the strong support for the work of the Working Group.

The Codex Secretariat reported on standards adopted at the CAC meeting the previous week.

OIE/CAC review of current standards

Dr Wilson reported on progress made in the OIE/CAC review of the existing and draft standards of both organisations, as a result of a meeting of OIE and CAC officials in Paris. A paper summarising relevant standards was updated in line with decisions made at the CAC meeting and is given in [Appendix III](#).

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The Working Group agreed that the OIE and CAC should work together in developing principles on traceability/traceback as a precursor to guidelines/standards.

The Working Group discussed the development of guidelines on 'good farming practice' as a joint publication of OIE/FAO/WHO. The OIE and CAC could then reference the document in their standards. Dr Chmitelin indicated that she would draft a scoping paper on the subject for examination by the Working Group.

The Working Group noted that the Executive Committee of Codex was now responsible for monitoring progress in the development of Codex standards and saw benefit in OIE writing to the new Chair and Secretariat of Codex outlining the Working Group's priorities and seeking Codex commitment to linking with the OIE in this work.

Review of progress in revising the OIE Terrestrial Code chapters on bovine tuberculosis and bovine brucellosis

The Chair outlined progress in revising the OIE *Terrestrial Animal Health Code* (the *Terrestrial Code*) chapter on bovine tuberculosis.

He believed that the chapter (and all *Code* chapters dealing with zoonoses) should contain a chapeau outlining the animal health and public health objectives of the recommendations. The Working Group noted that the usual OIE approach is to provide recommendations which allow 'safe trade' in various commodities and which are based on an assessment of the likelihood of the specified pathogen being transmissible via such commodities.

Dr Wilson advised the Working Group that the OIE was revising the criteria for making diseases notifiable, including on an emergency basis, and that such criteria would contain reasons for listing diseases. Dr James outlined the criteria used by the US USDA/FSIS to determine whether a disease or syndrome was of concern to the agency: was the disease or syndrome found in the food animal class in question? was it found in the geographic location in question? was it a zoonoses? and was it food borne?

The Working Group agreed that the OIE would provide to the Chair comments on the initial revision of the tuberculosis chapter, and that subsequently a revised document would be circulated to all Working Group members for comment. The document would then be reviewed at the December meeting of the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission.

Discussion of the Chair's scoping paper on the role and functionality of veterinary services in food safety

The Chair advised that the purpose of the paper was to promote discussion of the dual roles / functionalities of veterinary services throughout the food chain, by laying out a strategy for consideration.

It was agreed that the paper would be circulated for Member Country reaction as a Working Group paper (Appendix IV). In revising the paper, the Working Group discussed various issues including:

- . changing perceptions worldwide of the food safety responsibilities of regulatory agencies;
- . 'competent authority' and the criteria for the skills and competencies needed to address animal health and public health;
- . difficulties of addressing the multiple but interdependent functions of animal health and public health;
- . roles of veterinarians in risk assessment and risk management;
- . need for review of the definition of 'veterinary services';
- . need for the roles of veterinary services to be tailored to the particular needs of the country, for example whether their focus should be on animal pathogens or on residues/hazards not causing disease in animals.

OIE input into the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene

The Chair introduced the issue of OIE involvement in the work of Codex Committees and specifically in the work of the Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene. He believed that the Working Group could provide a balanced view regarding appropriate OIE input to address:

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- . relevant OIE texts which should influence the development of CAC documents; and
- . OIE texts which should be modified as a result of CAC work.

The Working Group agreed on a procedure for the OIE to access relevant CAC documents, distribute them to Working Group members for comment and provide an appropriate response to CAC.

Codex Committees and other groups considered relevant included:

- . Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene
- . Codex Committee on Food Hygiene
- . Codex Committee on Milk and Milk Products
- . Ad hoc Task Force on Animal Feeding
- . Codex Committee on Residues of Veterinary Drugs in Food
- . Codex Committee on Fish and Fishery Products
- . Codex Committee on Food Inspection and Certification Systems
- . Codex Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants
- . Codex Committee on Pesticide Residues.

The Working Group then discussed modifications to the draft standard proposed by the Chair to address the need perceived by the OIE to expand the text on ante- and post-mortem procedures to better address the interdependence of animal health and public health objectives.

Resolutions and recommendations arising from the OIE General Session and Regional meetings

The Working Group examined Resolution XXVII adopted at the OIE General Session and considered that its work programme adequately addressed the second recommendation.

The Working Group also examined recommendations arising from meeting of the regional Commissions for Europe and the Americas, and considered that all were adequately addressed by the work programme.

Work programme

The Working Group reviewed and modified priorities for its work programme, which is given in Appendix V.

Other business

The Working Group discussed principles of membership with regard to OIE Regional representation, and experts from relevant Codex Committees and other groups.

The Working Group agreed that the meeting agenda would determine which experts should be invited to attend a particular agenda item, and that the Chair would seek advice from the OIE Director-General prior to each meeting.

The Working Group recommended that the OIE Director-General re-examine the representation from Africa, Asia and South America, to enhance the participation of developing countries in the Working Group.

Next meeting

The Working Group agreed that its next meeting would be held in Paris in April 2004.

.../Appendices

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MEETING OF THE OIE WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL PRODUCTION FOOD SAFETY

Rome, 8-9 July 2003

Adopted Agenda

1. Introduction
 - discussion at OIE General Session
 - discussions at CAC
 2. OIE/CAC review of current standards
 3. Review of progress in revising the Terrestrial Code chapters on bovine tuberculosis and bovine brucellosis
 4. Discussion of the Chair's scoping paper
 5. Codex Committee on Meat Hygiene – OIE input
 6. Resolutions and recommendations arising from the OIE General Session and Regional meetings
 7. Work programme
 8. Other business
 9. Next meeting
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Table of correspondence of CAC/OIE standards				
Subject	OIE standard	OIE texts under discussion	Codex standard	Codex texts under discussion
General definitions	<p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 1.1.1 on 'General Definitions'</p> <p>Manual Glossary of Terms</p> <p>Definitions relevant to specific chapters in <i>Terrestrial Code</i> and <i>Terrestrial Manual</i></p>		<p>Definitions in 12th edition of Procedural Manual</p> <p>Specific definitions in different Standards</p>	
Import risk analysis	<p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> section 1.3 on 'Import Risk Analysis' (Chapters 1.3.1 on General considerations and 1.3.2 on Guidelines for risk analysis)</p> <p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> section 1.5 on 'Risk Analysis for Biologicals for Veterinary Use' (Chapters 1.5.1 to 1.5.3)</p> <p>Some specific chapters in <i>Terrestrial Code</i> refer to need for risk-based approach in determining disease status</p>	Planned minor changes to incorporate food safety aspects	<p>Principles and guidelines for the conduct of microbiological risk assessment (GL-30 1999)</p> <p>Working principles for risk analysis in the framework of the Codex Alimentarius</p>	<p>Proposed draft principles and guidelines for the conduct of microbiological risk management (CXFH) (ALINORM 03/13A step 2)</p> <p>Proposed draft working principles for risk analysis for food safety (CCGP, ALINORM 03/33A, step 2)</p>
Traceability		OIE to develop guidelines covering animal health and food safety from OIE <i>Scientific Revue</i> papers		<p>CCGP is developing a definition of 'traceability/product tracing' (CCGP ALINORM 03/33A)</p> <p>Drafts of specific texts under early discussion in CCFICS, CCFH, TFAF and TFFDB (ALINORM 03/30 A)</p>

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Appendix III

Subject	OIE standard	OIE texts under discussion	Codex standard	Codex texts under discussion
Equivalence	<i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 1.3.7 (Guidelines for reaching a judgement of equivalence of sanitary measures)		Guidelines for the development of equivalence agreements regarding food import and export inspection and certification systems (GL-34) Guidelines on the judgement of equivalence of sanitary measures associated with food inspection and certification systems	
Testing, inspection and certification procedures	<i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 1.2.2 (Certification procedures) <i>Terrestrial Manual</i> chapter 1.1.1 (Sampling methods)		Principles for food import and export inspection and certification (GL-20 1995) Guidelines for ... food import and export inspection and certification systems (GL-26 1997) Draft guidelines for food import control systems	
Evaluation of Veterinary Services and Competent Authorities	<i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapters 1.3.3 (Evaluation of veterinary services) and 1.3.4 (Guidelines for the evaluation of veterinary services) <i>Aquatic Code</i> chapter 1.4.3 (Evaluation of Competent Authorities)	Draft guidelines on use of para-professionals and private veterinarians in veterinary services under discussion		

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Appendix III

subject	OIE standard	OIE texts under discussion	Codex standard	Codex texts under discussion
Surveillance and monitoring	<p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 1.3.6 (Surveillance and monitoring of animal health)</p> <p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> appendix 3.8.1 (General principles for recognising a country or zone free from a given disease/infection)</p> <p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> appendix 3.8.4 (Surveillance and monitoring systems for BSE)</p> <p>Specific guidelines incorporated into some disease chapters</p>	More disease-specific guidelines under development	<p>Elements exist in the Codes covering meat (RCP-11, RCP 29, RCP 41, RCP 13, RCP 14); these will be replaced by the general principles of meat hygiene and proposed draft code of hygienic practice for meat</p> <p>General principles of meat hygiene (CCMPH)</p>	Elements exist in proposed draft code of hygienic practice for meat (CCMPH ALINORM 03/16 A App III)
Notification	<p><i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 1.1.3 (Notification and epidemiological information)</p> <p>OIE emergency disease notification procedures (EWS)</p>	Chapter under revision to incorporate single list of diseases (zoonotic potential is one criteria for listing), to be implemented on 1 January 2005	Codex Guidelines for the exchange of information in food control emergency situations (CCFICS) (GR-19/1995)	Proposed draft revision of the Guidelines (CCFICS ALINORM 03/30 A)
General food hygiene provisions			<p>Code of practice – general principles of food hygiene (RCP1 1969, rev3 1997, amended 1999)</p> <p>Principles for the establishment and application of microbiological criteria for foods (GL-21 1997)</p>	

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Appendix III

Subject	OIE standard	OIE texts under discussion	Codex standard	Codex texts under discussion
Zoonoses able to be transmitted through meat, milk and eggs	Bovine tuberculosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.3.3	revised chapters will better address food safety	Code of practice for control of the use of veterinary drugs (vol 3) (RCP-38 1993)	Proposed draft code of practice of good animal feeding (TFAF) (ALINORM 03/38 App II)
	Bovine brucellosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.3.1		Guidelines for the establishment of a regulatory programme for the control of veterinary drug residues in food (GL-16 1993)	Proposed draft guidelines for the control of <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> in foods (CXFH) (ALINORM 03/8)
	Porcine brucellosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.6.2		Code of hygienic practice for egg products (RCP-15 1976)	Proposed draft code of hygienic practice for milk and milk products (CCFH) (ALINORM 03/13 A App III)
	Caprine and ovine brucellosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.4.2		headings addressing hygiene in the standards for meat and meat products (vol 10), milk and milk products (vol 12)	Proposed draft revision of the Code of hygienic practice for egg products (CXFH ALINORM 03/13 A)
	Bovine cysticercoses <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.3.		Codes covering meat (RCP-11, RCP 29, RCP 41, RCP 13, RCP 14); these will be replaced by the general principles of meat hygiene and proposed draft code of hygienic practice for meat	Proposed draft revised Guidelines for the establishment of a regulatory programme for the control of veterinary drug residues in food GL-16 under revision by CCRVDF (ALINORM 03/31 A)
	Salmonellosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.10.2 (<i>Salmonella enteritidis</i> and <i>S. typhimurium</i>)		General principles of meat hygiene	Proposed draft code of hygienic practice for meat (CCMPH ALINORM 03/16 A App III)
	Bovine campylobacteriosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.3.2			
	Trichinellosis <i>Terrestrial Code</i> chapter 2.2.9			
	Listeriosis (milk and milk products) nil			
	Conditions arising from enterotoxigenic <i>E. coli</i> nil			

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Subject	OIE standard	OIE texts under discussion	Codex standard	Codex texts under discussion
Fish	<i>Aquatic Animal Health Code</i>		<p>Headings addressing hygiene in the standards for fish (vol 9A)</p> <p>Guidelines for the organoleptic evaluation of laboratories for fish, molluscs and crustaceans (GL-31 1999)</p> <p>Code of practice for fish and fishery products (general sections, fresh, frozen, minced, canned fish and frozen surumi)</p>	Draft code of practice for fish and fishery products (other sections and certificates) (CCFFP ALINORM 03/18)

ROLE AND FUNCTIONALITY OF VETERINARY SERVICES¹ IN FOOD SAFETY THROUGHOUT THE FOOD CHAIN

OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety

1 Introduction

Food safety is an issue of increasing concern world wide and prioritisation of food safety as an essential public health function was advocated recently by the World Health Assembly. Better monitoring and surveillance demonstrates that the main burden of food-borne disease is due to microbiological pathogens of animal origin and this has important implications for the veterinary profession at both the international and the national level. The possibility of chemical residues in food is also causing growing anxiety amongst consumers.

In a contemporary food safety environment, veterinarians have an essential and rapidly changing role in the prevention and control of food-borne zoonoses (even when animals are not clinically affected), other sources of food-borne disease and chemical contaminants of foods. In many situations, this role is achieved in parallel to prevention and control of diseases and conditions of animal health importance.

A 'production-to-consumption', risk-based approach to food control demands integrated involvement throughout the food chain. Where zoonoses are concerned, it is clear that there is an overlap between public health and animal health objectives, and a duality of veterinary functions. Veterinary competence can also be shared even when public health and animal health objectives are separate and distinct, and a number of countries are exploring such synergies in the reform of regulatory systems.

The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) has a SPS responsibility for elaborating standards and related texts for the prevention, control and eradication of animal diseases and zoonoses, while the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) elaborates standards and related texts for both safety and suitability aspects of food control. CAC and the OIE have strategies and mechanisms in place to co-ordinate and integrate food safety activities across the production to consumption continuum and so enhance the safety of foods of animal origin on a world-wide basis. A part of OIE's strategy was the setting up of a permanent Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety to review, develop and/or contribute to international food safety standards and guidelines, incorporating good animal production practice (including veterinary aspects) as it relates to food safety and taking into account a risk-based 'production to consumption' approach.

The OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety

The OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety has developed a work programme to enhance the effectiveness of *Veterinary Services* in improving food safety at both the international and national level. The Working Group will advise the Director General on implementation of the OIE strategy regarding²:

- Consideration all food-borne hazards arising from animals according to global food safety priorities;
- Reviewing OIE outputs to ensure animal production food safety is integrated in OIE Specialist Commissions and ad hoc group activities;
- Fully contributing to food standards development by CAC.

¹ For the purposes of this paper, 'veterinary services' is an Official Inspection System as defined in the CAC Guidelines for the Design, Operation, Assessment and Accreditation of Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems.

² Report of the meeting of the OIE *Ad hoc* Group on Food Safety. Paris, 18-19 April 2002

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There is a clear need for detailed exploration of the inter-related roles and functionality of veterinary services in the outputs of OIE and CAC. This paper proposes a Joint OIE / Codex text on the dual role and overall functionality of veterinary services in food safety and animal health throughout the food chain. The proposal includes reference to regulatory, industry and public aspects of veterinary effort, and promotes the opportunity for enhancement of dual food safety and animal health roles.

2 Elements of the contemporary food safety environment

2.1 Risk analysis

The emergence of risk-based approaches in elaboration of international standards has been highly influenced by the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS Agreement). A primary tenet of this Agreement is that “Members shall ensure that their sanitary and phytosanitary measures are based on an assessment, as appropriate to the circumstances, of the risks to human, animal, or plant life or health, taking into account risk assessment techniques developed by the relevant international organisations”.

In developing the *Terrestrial Animal Health Code*, OIE focuses on standards for specified hazards of biological origin. In contrast, CAC has primarily addressed biological hazards in food by developing general hygiene provisions i.e. codes of practice for different food commodities, as well as addressing chemical hazards by establishing maximum control limits.

Risk analysis offers new opportunities to OIE and CAC in the elaboration of optimal sanitary measures, either as international standards or as technical advice to national governments. In the case of food safety, improvements must be brought about in the face of ever-changing patterns of primary production, processing technology and consumer behaviour.

The application of a generic risk management framework is increasingly being recognised as a cross-sectoral means of bringing about a reduction in risks to human and animal health³ (see below).

2.2 Assessment and management of hazards and risks

Consideration of all food-borne hazards and their significance in terms of risks to human health is an essential food safety activity and a core component of HACCP. Most food-borne hazards of animal origin will be either intrinsic to the live animal (as a result of production or environmental factors) or introduced during handling and processing of the product.

Food safety hazards arising from animals can be grouped into several categories e.g. zoonoses resulting from clinical disease in animals, zoonoses resulting from asymptomatic infections in animals, zoonoses arising from environmental contamination, and chemical sources.

Hazards can also be introduced into the food chain from environmental sources, and zoonoses can obviously result from occupational exposure. As some food-borne zoonoses may occur independently of the consumption of animal products e.g. contamination via irrigation of vegetables with animal-derived pathogens, these pathways also need to be considered in terms of prevention and control.

At the same time, hazards of animal health significance that can be detected in animal populations need to be identified and managed.

³ Risk Analysis in Biosecurity for Food and Agriculture by S. C. Hathaway. *In* Report of an Expert Consultation on Biosecurity in Food and Agriculture. FAO, Rome 10-13 September 2002

Management of all these hazards by veterinary services needs to be carried out in a way which optimises the use of available resources.

2.3 "Production-to-consumption" approach

Currently, Codex codes of practice for food commodities of animal origin constitute one expression of a 'production-to-consumption' approach to food control. However, for the most part, they only include general references to primary production at the farm level.

The Proposed Draft Code of Practice for Meat Hygiene identifies a number of generic segments in the food chain⁴ and these could be used as a partial template in development of a Joint OIE/CAC standard for veterinary involvement in meat hygiene activities throughout the food chain. It should be noted that many aspects of meat hygiene require iterative loops between different segments in the food chain for optimal risk management. Effective functioning of good hygienic practice (GHP) and HACCP is reliant on such information exchange.

Several other OIE and Codex standards can be utilised to describe veterinary involvement in food safety throughout the food chain e.g., Principles for Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification (CAC/GL 20 - 1995), Recommendations of the *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding (Alinorm 01/38 and Alinorm 01/38A). A range of stakeholders may be involved in implementation of food safety controls e.g. regulatory authorities, industry and the public, and measures that are decided on may not necessarily be mandatory regulatory controls e.g. consumer education in safe food handling practices.

There should be an integrated approach to the design and implementation of regulatory systems covering the 'production-to-consumption' continuum. This approach should include:

- Monitoring and surveillance at the farm level, including consideration of data from non-regulatory sources, and monitoring at other steps in the food chain, including meat inspection;
- Monitoring and risk management of the use of veterinary drugs, including antimicrobial resistance;
- Exchange of monitoring information with all interested parties;
- Animal identification systems and traceability of animal products;
- Utilisation of diagnostic tests;
- Assessment / recognition of the competence of food safety authorities in exporting countries;
- Certification and official assurances;
- Emergency response capability;
- Integrated database management, epidemiological investigations and predictive microbiology;
- Potential effects on food safety of the transport of live animals.

2.4 Risk assessment and risk management

Food-borne hazards to human health

At present, there is room for significant improvement in many aspects of food safety, especially in the areas of ante- and post-mortem inspection and microbiological process control. Measures should be tailor-made to the range and prevalence of hazards in the particular animal population, focused on the most significant risks to human health, and focused at those steps in the 'production-to-consumption' continuum where they have the highest likelihood of reducing food-borne risks.

⁴ Proposed Draft Code of Hygienic Practice for Meat. Alinorm 03/16A, Appendix III. Codex Alimentarius Commission

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Other aspects include:

- Performance-based inspection for process control;
- Establishing decision criteria for the outcome of risk reductions;
- Risk-based surveillance of live animals and monitoring of animal products throughout the food chain;
- Effective information exchange and risk communication between all interested parties.

Animal health hazards

In determining the role and functionality of veterinary services in food safety throughout the 'production-to-consumption' continuum, hazards of animal health significance that can be detected in animal populations must first be identified, the risks assessed and properly managed, so as to optimise use of the available resources of veterinary services.

Veterinarians involved in food safety can also make a significant contribution to achieving animal health goals through application of animal health measures, and the extent to which animal health risk management functions should be carried out by veterinarians involved in food safety should be fully assessed, in order to maximise benefits to both sectors.

2.5 Food suitability

Beyond the assessment and management of food safety risks, assuring food suitability is an accepted component of a food safety programme.

CAC describes food hygiene as all conditions and measures necessary to ensure the safety and suitability of food at all stages of the food chain, and suitability as the assurance that food is acceptable for human consumption according to its intended use. As a result, the detection and removal of abnormalities in animal products that are not of public health significance are an accepted component of food safety programmes. Other aspects of suitability relating to consumer expectations include certification requirements e.g. Codex General Guidelines for Use of the Term 'Halal' (CAC/GL 24-1997).

2.6 Functionality

Functionality aspects of veterinary food safety services in relation to other veterinary activities that have no bearing on food safety or suitability is a key contemporary issue.

Effective food safety requires a high level of interaction and risk communication with many interested parties. Veterinarians may be called on to play a major role in these processes, especially in respect of the interface between different veterinary services and other government agencies that may be involved in food safety.

Further, food safety regulatory reform in a number of countries is changing the traditional roles of such parties. In an increasing number of countries, industry now has the primary responsibility for implementing food safety measures, and regulatory authorities are increasingly moving towards verification and audit roles. This provides new opportunities and responsibilities for veterinarians.

2.7 Animal welfare

Although animal welfare is beyond the mandate of CAC, it is a new part of the OIE's mandate. References to guidelines and recommendations on animal welfare may therefore be included in any standard resulting from this OIE/CAC cooperation.

2.8 Multidisciplinary framework

“Effective food control requires multidisciplinary scientific and technical inputs. Further, utilising risk assessment in a contemporary food safety environment is a multidisciplinary responsibility”⁵.

Any standard resulting from this OIE/CAC cooperation will benefit from multidisciplinary inputs to food safety.

3 Standards

OIE has identified that co-operation with CAC will enhance the scope and scientific quality of international standards, guidelines and related texts, especially in regard to food safety measures applicable at the farm level⁶.

According to its Statutes, CAC should "promote coordination of all food standards work undertaken by intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations" (Article 1[b]). Objective 3 of the CAC Strategic Framework recognises that CAC needed to interact closely with OIE; this has been confirmed at the 26th Session of the CAC.

Possible results⁷ may be:

- Joint Codex/OIE standards or related texts developed through joint committees or similar mechanisms;
- Codex or OIE standards or related texts elaborated by one party (and other co-operating organisations) on behalf of the other;
- Substantial co-operation at the initial drafting stages of Codex or OIE standards or related texts, with either party acting as a subsidiary body.

4 Development of an international standard on veterinary services' involvement in food safety activities

Development of a CAC/OIE standard or related text (hereafter referred to as "standard") on the roles and functionality of veterinary services in food safety is an important initiative of the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety.

The standard should cover the involvement of veterinary services in food safety activities which encompass food safety and suitability and zoonoses. Activities in these areas will variably contribute to "reducing food-borne risks to human health by preventing, eliminating or controlling hazards arising from animals prior to primary processing of animals and animal products"⁸. Further, the standard should cover veterinary competence in other aspects of food safety risk management e.g. public health policy, integrated design of surveillance systems for chemical hazards, certification, risk communication.

In addition, functionality aspects of veterinary services must be considered in respect of animal health activities that have no bearing on food safety or suitability.

⁵ Future Trends in Veterinary Public Health. Report of a WHO Study Group. WHO, Geneva 2002

⁶ Resolution No. XV. 70th General Session of the OIE, 2003

⁷ Codex Alimentarius Commission (2003). Guidelines for co-operation with intergovernmental organisations. CX/GP 03/8

⁸ Report of the Meeting of the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety. Paris, 18-20 November 2002

Appendix XXXI (contd)Appendix IV (contd)**4.1 Format**

The suggested format for elaboration of the "standard" is:

- Overarching principles for the involvement of veterinary services and other veterinary activities in food safety;
- A "code of practice" format that progresses through a "production-to-consumption" approach to food safety;
- Subsections that develop principles and guidelines according to the particular segment of the food chain;
- Specific linkages to other OIE and Codex texts describing detailed aspects of possible veterinary inputs e.g. on antimicrobial resistance.

4.2 Criteria

Suggested criteria for elaboration of the "standard" are:

- Consideration of food-borne risks to human health as a result of hazards arising from animals prior to primary processing of animals and animal products;
- Inclusion of animal health and welfare functions (including epidemiological surveillance) that may be carried out by veterinarians whose primary focus is food safety;
- Representation of a "production-to-consumption" approach to food safety;
- Reflection on effective use of veterinary services and other competent authorities;
- Utilisation of risk assessment wherever possible and practical;
- Inclusion of HACCP where appropriate;
- Inclusion of food suitability⁹ as well as food safety;
- Identification of the contributions of public and private sector veterinarians, and para-professionals.

Many of the above criteria are "horizontal" in nature will need to be applied at each segment of the 'production-to-consumption' continuum, with a description of iterative loops to veterinary inputs at other segments.

4.3 Ad hoc Groups

The Working Group is proposing that several *Ad hoc* Groups be formed to draft different modules for the "standard". Each *Ad hoc* Group should apply a generic framework for managing food-borne risks to consumers and describe veterinary inputs.

Each *Ad hoc* Group should consider modular and "horizontal" aspects of:

- Regulatory frameworks and responsibilities;
- Veterinary activities relating to food safety and suitability, zoonoses and animal health, and welfare;
- The relative contributions of public and private sector veterinarians, and para-professionals, and other stakeholders;
- The functionality of sharing veterinary competence to meet public health and animal health goals.

The Working Group is proposing that three *Ad hoc* Groups be set up to address the following priority issues:

- ante- and post-mortem activities in the production of meat to reduce hazards of public and animal health significance;
- involvement of veterinary services in risk reduction regarding *Salmonella enteritidis* in eggs;
- the role of veterinary services in the reduction of chemical hazards of public and animal health significance at the farm level.

⁹ Food suitability is described by CAC as "assurance that food is acceptable for human consumption according to its intended use"

Appendix XXXI (contd)

Appendix IV (contd)

Scope, terms of reference and membership for the *Ad hoc* Groups will be further developed by the Working Group out of session.

Appendix XXXI (contd)

Appendix IV (contd)

Appendix

Generic framework for managing public and animal health risks

To the greatest extent possible and practicable, design and implementation of sanitary measures should be based on application of four components of a generic framework:

Preliminary activities by the risk manager

Following identification of a public health or animal health issue by the risk manager, this initial process may include establishment of a risk profile to place the issue within a particular context, and provide as much information as possible to guide further action. The risk manager may commission a detailed risk assessment as an independent scientific process to inform decision-making, and if so, risk assessment policy should be established¹⁰. Once a risk assessment has been received, the last step in preliminary risk management activities is to consider the results for completeness and appropriateness.

Evaluation of risk management options

This is the process whereby potential risk management options are identified, and then selected according to appropriate decision-making criteria. It will usually involve balancing expectations in light of scientific information on risks and available measures. "Optimisation" of selected measures in terms of their efficiency, technological feasibility and practicality is an important goal.

Implementation of measures

Implementation of public or animal health measures will usually involve regulatory requirements, with a particular focus on HACCP. Flexibility in choice of individual measures applied by industry is a desirable element, as long as the overall programme can be objectively shown to achieve stated goals. On-going verification of sanitary measures by the competent authority is an essential action.

Monitoring and review of appropriateness of options chosen

This is the gathering and analysing of public and animal health data. Monitoring (which includes surveillance) should identify new problems as they emerge. Where there is evidence that required public and animal goals are not being achieved, redesign of measures will be needed.

¹⁰ Risk assessment policy refers to the documented guidelines (provided by the risk manager) for policy choices and scientific value judgements that may be necessary at specific points in the risk assessment.

Priorities for work programme

Procedures

In its meeting in November 2002, the OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety identified a need for procedures to be developed between the OIE and the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) on:

- . the development, adoption and publication of joint standards (where appropriate),
- . the mutual recognition of standards adopted by either organisation, and
- . the establishment of linkages between standards dealing with related subject areas.

Priorities

At its July 2003 meeting, the Working Group identified the following priorities for the OIE:

1. Horizontal issues covered or under discussion by CAC and OIE requiring joint inputs:
 - import risk analysis
 - surveillance and monitoring
 - traceability
 - equivalence
 - evaluation of veterinary services / competent authorities
 - testing, inspection and certification procedures

2. OIE texts addressing areas of interest to CAC
 - Zoonoses addressed in the *Terrestrial Code*
 - bovine tuberculosis (Chapter 2.3.3 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - bovine brucellosis (Chapter 2.3.1 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - porcine brucellosis (Chapter 2.6.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - caprine and ovine brucellosis (Chapter 2.4.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - bovine cysticercoses (Chapter 2.3.1 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - trichinellosis (Chapter 2.2.9 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - Zoonoses not always affecting animals
 - bovine campylobacteriosis (Chapter 2.3.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - salmonellosis (Chapter 2.10.2 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - listeriosis (nil)
 - conditions arising from enterotoxigenic *E. coli* (nil)

3. CAC texts addressing issues of interest to OIE
 - General Principles of Meat Hygiene
 - draft Code of Practice for Meat Hygiene
 - General Principles of Food Hygiene
 - Code of Practice for Milk and Milk Products
 - draft Code of Practice for Animal Feeding
 - Guidelines for the Use of Veterinary Drugs
 - Code of Practice for Fish and Fishery Products
 - draft Code of Practice for Aquaculture
 - standards on contaminants
 - standards on maximum limits for pesticide residues

4. OIE/CAC relationship
 - OIE letter to new CAC Chair regarding CAC Executive Secretariat
 - cooperation of key horizontal committees

Appendix XXXI (contd)Appendix V

5. Role and functionality of veterinary services in food safety throughout the food chain, with the following issues identified as priorities:
 - the ante- and post-mortem activities in the production of meat to reduce hazards of public and animal health significance;
 - involvement of veterinary services in risk reduction regarding *Salmonella enteritidis* in eggs;
 - the role of veterinary services in the reduction of chemical hazards of public and animal health significance at the farm level.
 6. Scoping paper on 'good farming practices'
 7. Other texts of importance to the work of the Working Group
 - equivalence (Chapter 1.3.7 of the *Terrestrial Code*)
 - BSE (Chapter 2.1.13 of the *Terrestrial Code*).
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