

OIE WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL PRODUCTION FOOD SAFETY

Report to the 77th General Session of the OIE International Committee Paris, 24–29 May 2009

1. Introduction

Prof. Stuart Slorach, Chairman of the Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety, presented the Group's activities.

The OIE Working Group on Animal Production Food Safety (Working Group) was established in 2002, following a request from OIE's International Committee to strengthen OIE's activities in the food safety area and further develop collaboration with the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC). The Working Group's role is to coordinate OIE activities related to animal production food safety and to advise the Director General and the relevant Specialist Commissions on issues in this area. The Working Group met for the eighth time at the OIE Headquarters on 4-6 November 2008. The following is a summary of the main discussions and results from the meeting: the full report is included in the March 2009 Terrestrial Animal Health Standards Commission (Terrestrial Code Commission) report, which has been distributed to all OIE Delegates and has been published on the OIE website (www.oie.int).

The Working Group received an update on OIE, CAC, FAO and WHO activities relevant to its work and then addressed the following main topics.

2. OIE-FAO Guide to Good Farming Practices for Animal Production Food Safety

The text for the OIE-FAO Guide to Good Farming Practices for Animal Production Food Safety has been finalised and has been published by the FAO as a booklet in English, French and Spanish. The text was also published in the OIE Bulletin (No. 2008-3). The Working Group discussed the possibility of conducting further work, for example the production of a Guide to Good Practices in specific sectors. However, FAO has already produced several sector-specific Guides to Good Practice and will continue to work on the elaboration of guides especially for developing countries and consider different production systems (e.g. commercial/village level), specific products (meat/milk/eggs) and animal species (ruminants/pigs/poultry). Therefore, the Working Group did not consider it a high priority for the OIE to develop additional Guides at this time, preferring to await feedback from Members on the Guide to Good Farming Practices.

3. Animal Identification and Traceability

The *Terrestrial Code* Chapter 4.2. Design and Implementation of Identification Systems to Achieve Animal Traceability was adopted at the 76th General Session in May 2008. No specific further work is planned for the *ad hoc* Group that developed Chapter 4.2., but new issues may arise at the OIE International Conference on Animal Identification and Traceability, to be held 23-25 March 2009, in Buenos Aires. The CAC and FAO consider this to be a very important conference. The Working Group agreed to revisit the need for any additional standard setting work on animal identification and traceability at its next meeting in November 2009, in light of discussions at the conference.

4. Revision of OIE Model Veterinary Certificates

The Working Group noted that the *Terrestrial Code* Chapter 5.10. Model Veterinary Certificates for International Trade in Live Animals, Hatching Eggs and products of Animal Origin was adopted at the 76th General Session in May 2008. It was reported that the proposed CAC draft Generic Model Health Certificates would be discussed at the meeting of the Codex Committee on Food Import and Export Inspection and Certification Systems in November 2008 and were developed to ensure consistency with work of the OIE.

5. Terrestrial Animal Feed

The Terrestrial Code Commission had reviewed Member comments on the draft *Terrestrial Code* Chapter on Control of Hazards of Animal Health and Public Health Importance in Animal Feed and accepted the recommendations made by the Working Group at their November 2007 meeting. The revised draft will be sent out to Members as part of the Terrestrial Code Commission's October 2008 report and the text will be proposed for adoption at the 77th OIE General Session in May 2009. The Working Group noted that the 32nd Session of the CAC in June 2009 will make a decision on possible new work in relation to animal feed.

The OIE will develop recommendations on feed for animals that are not used for food production (i.e. pets) in 2009. The Working Group supported this new area of work and requested that members be kept informed of developments and be invited to review text in regard to relevant food safety issues. In doing so it noted the potential risk that controls over the use of raw materials and other ingredients in pet food may fail, that food intended for human consumption may be contaminated by ingredients/materials intended for pet food and that there are situations where humans consume food intended for pets.

6. Aquatic Animal Feed

The *Aquatic Code* Appendix 3.5.1. Guidelines on the Control of Aquatic Animal Health Hazards in Aquatic Animal Feed was adopted at the 76th General Session in May 2008. This text addresses aquatic animal health but not food safety issues. The Aquatic Animal Health Standards Commission (Aquatic Animals Commission) recommended that the OIE consider extending its mandate to address the food safety implications for aquatic animals and aquatic animal products. Topics that may need to be addressed include identification and traceability, biotechnology and antimicrobial resistance, but the first priority for the OIE will be the development of advice on the food safety implications of feed for aquatic animals. The OIE plans to convene an *ad hoc* Group to develop this text. This *ad hoc* Group will report to the Working Group and texts will then be submitted to the Aquatic Animals Commission for possible inclusion in the Aquatic Code. The Working Group agreed to review draft text prepared by the *ad hoc* Group and the Codex Secretariat is willing to participate in the *ad hoc* Group to ensure consistency with the existing work in CAC.

7. Salmonellosis

The Working Group noted that at its October 2008 meeting the Terrestrial Code Commission had reviewed Member comments on a draft *Terrestrial Code* Chapter on Detection, Control and Prevention of *Salmonella* spp. in Poultry and would issue the revised text for Member comments, with a view to adoption at the 77th General Session in May 2009. The Working Group recommended that the Terrestrial Code Commission consider the inclusion of the following text in this chapter, Article X.X. 5, as a new point after the existing point 6: 'While *Salmonella* in general contaminates poultry flocks through a number of (environmental) sources, *Salmonella* Enteritidis is characterised by its ovarian transmission pattern. Some countries have succeeded in and others have targets for eradicating (or significantly reducing) *Salmonella* Enteritidis from egg-producing flocks through a guided policy for eradication from the top of the production pyramid, i.e. from grandparent flocks through breeder flocks to layer flocks.'

The Working Group noted that the Terrestrial Code Commission had received extensive comments from Members on the revision of Chapter 6.3. Hygiene and Biosecurity Procedures in Poultry Production and that these comments had been forwarded to the *ad hoc* Group on Salmonellosis for review at its February 2009 meeting. The Working Group undertook to review further text once this is available. The Working Group recommended that the OIE continue to collaborate with the Codex Committee on Food Hygiene, particularly in regard to the work on food safety aspects of salmonellosis and campylobacteriosis.

FAO, the OIE and the World Bank have developed a report on biosecurity for poultry which was presented at the Sixth International Ministerial Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza (<http://www.imcapi2008.gov.eg/>). This work will be followed up to test different options for the implementation of biosecurity in developing countries under different conditions. The feasibility/acceptability of different options and their cost-effectiveness will be investigated with the aim of elaborating specific guidelines on what can be implemented in developing countries under various production systems and in compliance with OIE norms.

8. Antimicrobial resistance

The Working Group was informed about the work done by the OIE over the last 5 years on the issue of antimicrobial resistance and about OIE work aimed at helping countries to implement effective legislation to assure the quality of veterinary medicinal products. The next OIE Regional Conference on Veterinary Medicinal Products is planned to take place in the Middle East in late 2009. The 2nd Session of the Codex *ad hoc* Intergovernmental Task Force on Antimicrobial Resistance (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 20-24 October 2008) agreed to consolidate three Codex documents (on Risk Assessment, Risk Profiles and Risk Management Guidance to Contain Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistant Microorganisms) into a single document entitled "Proposed Draft Guidelines for Risk Analysis of Foodborne Antimicrobial Resistance". The document will be redrafted by an electronic working group and the revised version will then be circulated for comment at Step 3 and will be further considered at the third session of the Task Force, to be held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in October 2009. The Working Group encouraged the OIE to continue to engage closely with CAC, FAO, WHO and VICH on the important topic of antimicrobial resistance.

9. Biotechnology

In future the OIE *ad hoc* Group on Biotechnology will be divided into two separate groups: one focused on vaccinology and the other on molecular diagnostic tests. The priority issues for the *ad hoc* Group on vaccinology, which met for the first time in November 2008, will be the use of biotechnology derived vaccines on animals. The OIE will first consider the animal health implications then the food safety implications of the use of this technology. The Working Group noted that broad scientific expertise would be needed to address possible food safety implications of biotechnology derived vaccines, including both vaccine experts and experts in human health. This work could be done via the established OIE *ad hoc* Group process or via another process, such as a tripartite OIE/FAO/WHO expert meeting. Regardless of which approach is taken, the key consideration is that appropriately qualified experts be involved in this procedure and the Working Group recommended that FAO, OIE and WHO all be involved in nominating appropriate experts for this work.

The Working Group was informed that FAO and WHO will organise an expert meeting on Nanotechnology in Food and Agriculture, to be held in Rome in early 2009 and it recommended that insofar as food safety issues related to the use of nanotechnology in animal vaccines are concerned, the OIE and the Working Group should be involved.

World Bank Study - Livestock and Slaughter Waste Management

The Working Group was informed about the discussions held at the June 2008 meeting on the World Bank project on Livestock and Slaughter Waste Management.

10. Work programme for 2009

The Working Group considered that to a considerable degree it had achieved many of the goals established at its first meeting and that the time had come to re-examine the Working Group's mandate and *modus operandi* with a view to ensuring its ongoing relevance to the needs of OIE Members. The Working Group requested that the Director General prepare a discussion paper on identifying the priority pathogens for standard setting activities in the animal production food safety area. The Working Group agreed to develop revised terms of reference and *modus operandi* prior to its November 2009 meeting, via email and teleconference discussions.

The Director General agreed with the Working Group's proposal to release the reports of its meetings shortly after they have been approved by the Terrestrial Code Commission. This would allow for focal points in Member countries and territories, especially those responsible for veterinary public health, to receive the report in a more timely manner.

The Work Programme for 2009 comprises a) Horizontal issues (animal identification and traceability, antimicrobial resistance, good farming practices, terrestrial and aquatic animal feed, biotechnology, and import risk analysis), b) Disease-specific OIE texts (brucellosis, salmonellosis in poultry, campylobacteriosis in broilers and the identification of priority pathogens for standard setting activities and, c) Continuing to strengthen the relationship between OIE and Codex. The Working Group planned plans to hold its next meeting at the OIE Headquarters on 3-5 November 2009.
