

ACMSF Work Plan

ACMSF Work Plan 2022/23

This work plan shows the main areas of ACMSF's work over the next 12 to 18 months. It should be noted that the Committee must maintain the flexibility to consider urgent issues that arise unpredictably, and discussions scheduled in the work programme may therefore be deferred.

ACMSF Terms of reference

To assess the risk to humans of microorganisms which are used, or occur, in or on food, and to advise the Food Standards Agency on any matters relating to the microbiological safety of food.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
1. Horizon scanning		
Horizon scanning workshop for members to assess emerging microbiological issues of concern and rank issues in terms of strategic priority and urgency	Workshop was held in June 2022. The Committee will consider at the October 2022 plenary meeting the finalised version of the output from the June horizon scanning workshop.	List of outputs from the workshop including short-listed priorities for more in-depth consideration.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
2. Newly Emerging Pathogens		
The Newly Emerging Pathogens Working Group provides advice on the significance and risks from newly emerging or re-emerging pathogens through food chain exposure pathways.	Continuous.	The committee to draw the FSA's attention to any risks to human health from newly emerging pathogens via food.
3. Microbiological Surveillance of food		
The Surveillance Working Group provides advice as required in connection with the FSA's microbiological food surveillance programme and any other surveillance relevant to foodborne disease.	Working group activities are continuous.	Surveillance Working Group/Committee comments on survey protocols and survey results for consideration by FSA in their microbiological food surveillance activities.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
4. Developing trends in relation to foodborne disease	As issues arise.	
The Committee receives updates on research, surveys, investigations, meetings and conferences of interest.	Updates will be provided based on the activities of Epidemiology of Foodborne Infection Group.	ACMSF provides comments on the updates it receives for the FSA's consideration.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
5. International and EU developments on the microbiological safety of food		
The Committee is updated on issues of relevance and significant developments at an EU and international level on microbiological food safety, such as EFSA opinions and Codex Committee on Food Hygiene meetings.	As issues arise.	ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.
6. Microbiological incidents and outbreaks		
The views of the Committee will be sought where necessary and updates provided on outbreaks of significance.	As issues arise.	ACMSF assessment of the risks in relation to significant microbiological outbreaks/incidents.

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7. Antimicrobial resistance ACMSF's role through its Working Group on AMR is to assess the risks to humans from foodborne transmission of antimicrobial-resistant microorganisms and provide advice to the FSA.	The subgroup considers developments and emerging issues in relation to antimicrobial resistance and the food chain. Working group activities are continuous. Summaries of discussions and recommendations are provided at plenary meetings.	ACMSF assessment of the key risks to the food chain which may have consequences for human health and identification of key research or surveillance gaps in relation to the food chain.
8. Social science research relating to microbiological food safety risks	The Committee will receive updates on the findings of social science research which may have a bearing on the assessment of microbiological food safety risks.	ACMSF to note updates and provide comments if desired.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
9. FSA Board's New Approach in relation to Rare Burgers	The Committee will be updated on work the FSA is undertaking following the FSA Board's decision on rare burgers.	Committee to be kept informed of progress and to contribute to the work where appropriate.
10. Subgroup on toxin-producing Clostridia in food		
Review the risk posed by botulinum toxin producing Clostridia in foods	The committee will be updated on the activities of the group. They are working towards publishing a report in 2023.	A report which updates and builds on a previous ACMSF report on "Vacuum Packaging and Associated Processes" that was produced in 1992.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
11. Regulated products subgroup To carry out risk assessment on regulated products in relation to microbiological safety of food	As issues arises.	ACMSF risk assessment on regulated products.
12. FSA's survey of infectious intestinal disease in the UK	The committee will receive a presentation on the findings of this survey carried out Ipsos MORI at a future meeting.	ACMSF to note findings and provide comments if desired.
13. The third study of infectious intestinal disease in the UK (IID3) Research project aims to estimate the burden and causes of infectious intestinal disease in the UK population	The committee will be updated on this recently commissioned study.	ACMSF to note project and provide comments if desired.

Topic	Progress	Expected Output
14. Quality Assurance of Microbiological Strategic Risk Assessments	The committee will discuss process used to review the FSA's microbiological food safety strategic risk assessments.	ACMSF views on process used to review microbiological food safety strategic risk assessments.
15. Survey of microbiological quality of ready to eat food sold on social media	The committee will discuss Food Standards Scotland's proposed survey of microbiological quality of ready to eat food sold on social media.	ACMSF to provide comments as requested on this proposed survey.
16. UK Food Safety Network	The committee will receive a presentation on the objectives of this network. This update will cover the research priorities that have been developed with food stakeholders and the network's planned activities.	ACMSF to note update and provide comments if desired.

Last reviewed October 2022