



Minutes of the fifth meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee of **safefood**, the Food Safety Promotion Board, held on Thursday 25th January, 2007 at 10.30 am in the Dublin office of **safefood**, Block B, Abbey Court, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.

PRESENT:

Prof Charles Daly (Chair) (CD)
Prof David McDowell (Vice-Chair) (DMcD)
Dr Brian Smyth (BS)
Dr Ken Baird (KB)
Mr Gerry McCurdy (GMcC)
Ms Patricia McCusker (PMcC)
Prof Barbara Livingstone (BL)
Mr Barney Heywood (BH)
Mr Martin Mullane (MM)
Ms Catherine Foye (CF)
Prof Shay Fanning (SF)
Dr John Egan (JE)
Dr Emer Shelly (ES)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Martin Higgins, Chief Executive (MH)
Dr Cliodhna Foley-Nolan, Director, Human Health & Nutrition (CFN)
Dr Geraldine Quinn, Scientific Support Manager (GQ)
Ms Suzanne Doran, Director of Marketing & Communications (SD)
Dr Gary Kearney, Laboratory Liaison Manager (GK)
Dr David McCleary, Chief Specialist Microbiology (DMC)
Ms Eileen O'Connor, Minute Secretary (EOC)

APOLOGIES:

Mr Bert Houston
Dr Brian Gaffney
Mr Jim Buckley
Dr Margaret Patterson
Dr Derval Igoe
Dr Wayne Anderson
Dr Thomas Quigley
Mr Ray Dolan

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all Members to the fifth meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC).

The Chair introduced GK, Laboratory Liaison Manager.

Apologies were noted and recorded.

2. MINUTES OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE SAC HELD ON 26TH SEPTEMBER 2006.

Agreed: The minutes were adopted with amendments.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Action: Minutes from SAC Review Meeting, held on 15th November 2006 at Clontarf Castle were distributed. Members informed the Executive that they are keen to contribute to the Corporate Plan and agreed with the need for enhanced North/South cooperation.

4. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (oral)

Members were reminded to declare interest on topics where appropriate.

5. ANTI-MICROBIAL RESISTANT BACTERIA IN THE FOOD CHAIN

Members were invited to consider the paper on antimicrobial resistance and food safety. The following advice was given:

- It is necessary to ascertain what work has already been carried out.
- More work is needed before moving to the next step.
- The proposal and aims cover a broad remit therefore should be broken down for timely deliverables.
- To review the current state of knowledge, ascertain what we do not know.
- Define if there is a role for **safefood** and going forward what the role should be.
- An appropriate person should be appointed to lead the group.

Action: SF agreed to act as chairman. DMcD also volunteered to be part of the group. BS agreed that he would take part or would source someone from his department.

Action: Members also agreed that external expertise should be sourced, i.e. public health, food and veterinary areas. GMcC

will investigate whether there is a suitable person available from FSANI.

Action: GQ to liaise with SF. A meeting will be set up and a suitable time line put in place.

6. DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH/SOUTH WORKING

Action: A sub-group comprising of members of the SAC and Advisory Board will be set up to develop an all-island dimension in research, to brainstorm opportunities and a structure for going forward.

SF, GMcC, DMcD, JE, BS, MM and CD voiced interest in joining the sub-group.

Action: MH will raise this issue at the Advisory Board meeting on 26th January for discussion and will ask for further volunteers to join the sub-group.

7. CONSUMER FOCUSED REVIEW (CFR)

(i) Beef Review

Noted: The report was well received. Members provided comments which will be taken on board.

(ii) Dairy Chain Review

Noted: Members discussed what areas should be covered by the Dairy CFR.

Agreed: It was agreed that liquid milk should be looked at initially and perhaps include reference to other dairy products.

8. CHALLENGES AND EMERGING ISSUES: *TOUR DE TABLE*

The Chair invited Members to identify issues that they considered to be of note. These included:

- Food allergy – there is a build up of press interest at the moment. More awareness and better understanding is needed, as is a proper system of support, should be pushed on a scientific basis. There is also a knowledge gap at catering level.
- Seven percent of water in RoI is either insufficiently tested or not fit. There is a gap in the regulatory system information.
- Differences between labelling system in the North and the South.

- Resources to provide school children with healthy lunches. Possibly RoI can learn from NI approach for schools.
- *Salmonella* – rise in cases over last eighteen months in GB may be related to imported eggs.
- European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) in Stockholm will be publishing a report soon which will have information relevant to SAC. There will be an emphasis in the report on the need for the harmonisation of surveillance practices across the EU.

9. UPDATES

- **2008-2010 Corporate Strategy**
MH informed the SAC that **safefood** is required to produce three-yearly corporate plans. The next one is 2008-2010. The plan is to be submitted to the sponsoring departments by July 2007. This will be put on the agenda of the next SAC meeting for more detailed discussion and input.
- **Communications**
SD provided an update of current activities in the Marketing & Communication Directorate at **safefood**.
- **Research**
Members were given an update on current research activities at **safefood**, main points included:
 - Research will underpin Corporate Strategy going forward.
 - Approach for 2007 will be short sharp projects acknowledging gaps.
- **Extranet Site**
The site should be back in working order from early February 2007.

10. SAC PROGRESS REPORT DOCUMENT

Noted: Members were given the updated SAC Progress Report document.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted: The Chair will not be available for the SAC meeting on 27th September and the Vice-Chair will chair the September meeting.

Action: A new procedure has been set up for expense claims and Members will return expense claim forms to either GQ or EOC within one month of meetings.

As there was no further business the meeting closed.

The next business meeting of the SAC will be held in the Dublin office of **safefood** on Thursday 26th April, 2007.

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____