



Report of the U.S. Delegate, 7th Session, Codex Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Task Force on Animal Feeding

February 4-8, 2013,
Bern Switzerland

The United States participated in the 7th Session of the [Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Codex Task Force on Animal Feeding](#) (AFTF), which completed their terms of reference to develop two documents, the proposed draft Guidelines on the Application of Risk Assessment for Feed and the proposed draft Examples of Hazards in Feed with Potential Relevance for Human Health. The Task Force recommended both documents for adoption by the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) at Step 8 and Step 5/8, respectively.

The 7th Session of AFTF was attended by 139 participants, representing 40 Member countries, one Member organization (the European Union - EU), and 7 international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Dr. Daniel McChesney of the FDA Center for Veterinary Drugs served as the Head of the Delegation for the United States.

A summary of the results of the 7th Session of AFTF is given below. The full report of the Session can be found on the Codex Website: www.codexalimentarius.org/meetings-reports/en/.

Proposed Draft *Guidelines on the Application of Risk Assessment for Feed*

- The Task Force maintained their approach to make the document consistent with other Codex text and Codex principles on Risk Assessment as much as possible, with some modifications to make it specifically applicable to animal feeding.
- The glossary of definitions was modified to make it consistent with the *Codex Code of Practice on Good Animal Feeding* (CAC/RCP 54-2004) and other Codex texts. The Task Force agreed to add Codex definitions, such as 'food' and 'processing aids,' where mentioned in the text. The Task Force agreed to develop a new definition for 'biotransformation,' which is defined as a "product resulting from the transformation of a chemical or biological agent in the body of the food producing animal (e.g. via metabolic processes)."
- The Task Force indicated that preliminary risk management activities may encompass several steps, including identification of a food safety problem arising from feed; establishment of a risk profile; ranking of the hazard for risk assessment and risk management priority; determination of a risk assessment policy for the conduct of the risk assessment; definition of the output form of the

risk assessment; commissioning of the risk assessment, and consideration of the possible results of the risk assessment.

- The Task Force agreed to the Netherlands' proposal to revise the Sections on Exposure Assessment. The proposed revisions further distinguished risk characterization from exposure assessment activities and clarified that feed risk assessments used to derive a risk estimate does not suggest a full human risk assessment. The Task Force accepted the proposal with some refinements.
- The Task Force also included text to illustrate the need for risk characterization and subsequent risk management options to consider exposure assessments of hazards from other sources, such those from the environment or food of non-animal origin.
- The Task Force also included text to explain that an initial output of a risk assessment could be based on a comparison of the estimated feed hazard in edible products with existing international or national levels for food commodities.

Proposed Draft Examples of Hazards in Feed with Potential Relevance for Human Health

- An electronic working group chaired by Switzerland finalized for review by the Task Force the draft guidance document for national governments in prioritizing hazards in animal feed. The final version includes one annex illustrating an example of the prioritization process and another annex describing examples of hazards in feed with potential relevance for human health. The Task Force decided to include a third annex to list separately additional references on information on potential hazard/feed/edible product combinations and examples of prioritization frameworks, processes and methods.
- The Task Force reviewed the draft and maintained the approach that the document should be consistent as possible with other Codex text and principles.
- The Task Force agreed to provide an example of prioritization process using a multi- criteria analysis approach, while clarifying that other approaches could be used for prioritization. The introduction to the example illustration makes clear that that this serves for illustrative purposes only and is based on generic example which does not apply to any real specific hazard/feed/edible product combination.
- The Task Force agreed to describe the prioritization process as consisting of seven steps, (1) identification of the hazard, the feed and edible product potentially associated with food safety problems;(2) identification and definition of the criteria by which each selected hazard/feed/edible product combination will be quantified;(3) assignment of criterion-based values to the hazard/feed/edible product combinations; (4) normalization of these values to make them comparable between criteria; (5) weighting of the criteria to reflect their relative importance;(6) combining the weighted normalized values for each hazard/feed/edible product combination to produce a score and ranking of the

scores to obtain the order of priority; (7) reporting of the process, methods and results.

- The Task Force agreed to indicate in the document that the criteria which could be used for prioritization included those related to the extent of the occurrence of the hazard; effect on human health; and other legitimate factors relevant for the health production of consumers, in accordance with Codex principles.
- The Task Force amended some of the examples listed as hazards with potential relevance to human health. The Task Force agreed with the United States interventions to delete trichonella from the examples listed and delete 'viruses' from the annex since viruses pertained to animal health, which is outside the scope of work of the Task Force.
- The Task Force decided to include zeraleone as an example of mycotoxins, as requested by Thailand, but noted that it was not a major contaminant of edible products as it was rapidly metabolized and/or excreted.
- As requested by the European Union, the Task Force amended the section on organic chemicals to distinguish between dioxins and polychlorinated biphenyls and to include medicated feed as another potential source of cross contamination of feed.

Upon the conclusion of the document, the Task Force opened for debate whether the Annex on Examples of Hazards of Potential Relevance for Human Health ("Annex") should be retained and advanced to the Commission for adoption. Some delegations supported retaining the Annex as it was essential for completeness of the document and served to provide a common understanding of these hazards. Other delegations opposed retaining the Annex, arguing that the information was too broadly described, it would be difficult to maintain and update, and it could be misinterpreted and possibly serve as a basis for creating unjustified barriers to trade.

The majority of Task Force members favored retaining the Annex but agreed to further include language in the document to clarify that the content of the Annex was subject to being updated, was not a comprehensive description of all situations related to feed and food safety, not necessarily applicable to all countries, and its primary purpose was to provide illustrative examples.

The majority of the Task Force members supported adoption of the document at Step 5/8. Countries, Argentina, Brazil, and Costa Rica expressed their reservation on the inclusion of the Annex. Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Saudi Arabia and Thailand noted in the report that they required more time to consult at a national level on the changes made to the document.