

# The Work of the Scientific Advisory Committees

Information on the remit of the council and the role of a committee member.

The below provides a brief description of the committees' remits, and the work and areas you could undertake as part of a committee. The working language of all the committees and expert groups is English.

## Committee on Toxicity

### Remit

To assess and advise on the toxic risk to the public of substances which are:

- Used/proposed to be used as food additives
- Used in such a way that they might contaminate food through their use or natural occurrence in agriculture (including horticulture and veterinary practice), or in the distribution, storage, preparation, processing or packaging of food
- Used or proposed to be used, manufactured or produced in industry, agriculture, food storage or any other workplace
- Used or proposed to be used as household goods or toilet goods and preparations
- Used or proposed to be used as drugs, when advice is requested by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency
- Used or proposed to be used or disposed of in such a way as to result in pollution of the environment

To advise on important general principles or new scientific discoveries in connection with toxic risks, to co-ordinate with other bodies concerned with the assessment of toxic risks and to present recommendations for toxicity testing.

### Your role

As an expert on [the COT](#) you will help to assess and advise on the risks arising from a wide range of chemicals in food and other products and from environmental exposure. These range from organic and inorganic contaminants in the UK diet, natural toxins in supplements, to nicotine (or non-nicotine) device systems and novel heat not burn commercial products. You might also consider appropriate upper levels for nutrients and will undertake horizon scanning.

You may work with other Scientific Advisory Committees to consider individual cross-cutting topics more extensively – recent working groups include synthesising epidemiological evidence, and risk-benefit analysis of potassium replacements for sodium salts. You will work with colleagues with a range of toxicological backgrounds and those from other scientific disciplines as well as lay members and will be fully supported by an administrative and scientific secretariat.

## Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food

### Remit

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

## **Your role**

As an expert on the [ACMSF](#) you could be assessing and advising on foodborne microbiological risks including: those arising from incidents, outbreaks and newly emerging pathogens; trends in foodborne disease; or international developments on the microbiological safety of food. You will also horizon scan and might work on specialised expert groups covering topics such as *Campylobacter*, antimicrobial resistance or microbiological food surveillance. You will work with colleagues with a range of microbiological expertise as well as those from other disciplines and lay members. You will be fully supported by an administrative and scientific secretariat.

## **Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes**

### **Remit**

To advise the central authorities responsible, in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland respectively on any matters relating to novel foods (including genetically modified foods) and novel food processes, including food irradiation, having regard where appropriate to the views of relevant expert bodies.

### **Your role**

As an expert in the [ACNFP](#) you will assess and advise on the potential risks to the consumer from novel foods and food processes, including the use of genetically modified organisms in food and animal feed. You will advise on the potential safety risks of new foods or food processes to ensure new foods entering the market are safe to be enjoyed by consumers. Novel ingredients might be derived from fruits, plants or insects; processes such as irradiation and microbial fermentation, as well as foods traditionally eaten outside Europe which are novel to the UK. Recent ACNFP topics have included chia seeds and oils extracted from microalgae. You will work with colleagues from a range of scientific disciplines as well as non-scientific experts and lay members. You will be fully supported by an administrative and scientific secretariat.

## **The Animal Feed and Feed Additives Joint Expert Group**

### **Remit**

The Animal Feed and Feed Additives Joint Expert Group reports to the COT. The group assesses and provides advice to the FSA or other government departments on applications for the authorisation of feed additives and substances used in animal feed for both animals and human consumers of animal derived products and on other topics relevant to the assessment of such applications as requested. The group coordinates with and considers the opinions of other relevant bodies concerned with the assessment of feed additives and provides advice on general principals or new scientific discoveries in connection with the authorisation of feed additives and substances.

### **Your role**

As an expert in the [AFFAJEG](#) you will assess and advise on the potential risks to animals, consumers, users and the environment from feed additives, as well as feed materials and feed for particular nutritional purposes. You will also provide targeted expert advice on risk assessments on feed additives carried out by the FSA, as a specialist in your area. Feed

additives include a wide variety of organic and inorganic substances and organisms, posing different challenges for assessment. You will also provide expert advice on the efficacy of these additives under their proposed conditions of use, which may aim to improve milk yield, reduce methane production, improve palatability or help regulate the gut microbiota, amongst others. You will work with colleagues from a range of scientific disciplines and will be fully supported by an administrative and scientific secretariat.