



The mission of the Agency is to guarantee the safety of the food chain and the quality of our food so as to protect the health of humans, animals and plants.

Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Expertise in risk assessment of chemical, biological and physical hazards in the food chain

Expertise in risk assessment in plant and animal health

Expertise in scientific evaluation of self-checking sectorial guides

Expertise in scientific evaluation of risk management measures

WHO?

The **Belgian Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC)** is a federal executive agency with authority over the whole Belgian territory. It lays down the operational standards applicable to businesses and integrates all official control and inspection services for the food chain. In accordance with the Federal law of 4 February 2000, the FASFC is responsible for laying down, implementing and enforcing measures related to the analysis and the management of risks in the food chain that may affect the health of consumers, animals and plants.

The **Scientific Committee (SciCom)** is a consultative body of the FASFC. It occupies a central position in the risk assessment of the food chain. The Committee is composed of **22 members with complementary expertise** nominated by Royal decree for a mandate of 4 years. It is scientifically and administratively supported by a **team of 8 experts in risk assessment (the Staff direction for risk assessment)** with respect to biological and chemical hazards in the food chain, animal health and plant health.

Mission

The main task of the SciCom is to provide **INDEPENDENT** scientific advice in relation to risk assessment and risk management on the matters related to the competencies of the FASFC (Federal law of 2 February 2000), namely on:

- (emerging) risks in the food chain (food, animal health, plant health)
- all laws and royal decrees in relation to risk assessment and risk management of the food chain, animal health and plant protection
- the yearly control program of the food chain
- self-checking sectorial guides (GMP, GHP, HACCP, sectorial control plans, legislation, ...) (Royal Decree of 14 November 2003)

Opinions are prepared in *ad hoc* working groups composed of SciCom members and external experts. Hereto the SciCom can make an appeal to a **network of > 200 national experts**. For particular dossiers also **international experts** are consulted. The SciCom meets monthly in plenary session.

External scientific experts are invited to become member of the SciCom network by registering to the special **expert call** website: http://www.favv-afsc.fgov.be/home/application/Com_sci_form_fr.asp

Output

Each year the SciCom issues between 20-30 opinions, which are published on the FASFC website in Dutch, French and English (abstracts). Opinions can be either formal opinions (published within 3 to 6 months), rapid opinions (within 1 month) or urgent opinions (in case of a crisis situation; issued within 24 to 48 hours), and on request of the Chief Executive Officer or the Minister according to predetermined procedures. Opinions may also result from self-tasking activities.

Next to providing scientific opinions, the SciCom:

- organizes 1x/year a **scientific** workshop or symposium e.g.:
 - "Improving the safety of the food chain through risk prevention in plant and animal production" (2014)
 - "Risk ranking in the food chain" (2013)
 - "Food Safety of the Short Supply Chain" (2012)
 - "Applications of Microbiological Risk Assessment in the Food Chain" (2011)
 - "Nanotechnology in the Food Chain" (2010)
- publishes regularly **scientific articles** and vulgarization **brochures**
- participates or has participated in different **EU projects** (e.g. PERIAPT, EMRISK, SAFEFOOD-ERA, EMIDA-ERA, ANIHWA-ERA) and **EFSA scientific working groups and panels**

Website : <http://www.favv-afsc.fgov.be/scientificcommittee/>

Contact

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