

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **HC/CFIA Research and Surveillance Subcommittee (RSSC) on Food Safety and Nutrition**

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At the federal level, Health Canada (HC) and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) share responsibilities for food safety. HC sets standards and policies on food safety and nutrition, while the CFIA enforces them. This interactive relationship requires that HC and CFIA maintain effective inter-agency mechanisms to ensure close cooperation and collaboration at all levels on food safety and nutrition activities.

#### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES:**

- Committee activities must contribute to the protection and/or improvement of the health of Canadians.
- Committee activities shall be based on sound science and evidence based analysis involving a thorough review of all relevant information.
- While protection of public health is the primary objective, food policy recommendations will have regard, where appropriate, to economic and other legitimate factors.
- Committee activities should lead to timely and accountable decision-making in the areas of shared responsibility of the Agency and the Department.

#### **MANDATE:**

To support the mandate of the Science and Policy Advisory Committee and be the forum for the development of joint planning, and coordination strategies in the areas of research, surveillance, and information exchange.

#### **SCOPE:**

The RSSC's scope of activities includes a wide range of issues related to food safety and nutrition, such as food safety along the food continuum and information to consumers on healthy choices. Other HC/CFIA joint mandated issues, e.g., non-foodborne zoonoses may be addressed, as appropriate. The specific activities of the RSSC include, but are not limited to:

- development of frameworks for information exchange
- coordination of research and data-gathering activities
- intelligence gathering (e.g., food borne disease reporting, early warning systems)

**MEMBERSHIP:**

The RSSC will be chaired by a HC Director General and a CFIA Executive Director, or their delegates. Members are expected to fully participate in the activities of the RSSC, as well as to communicate, seek input on, and relay issues within parent organizations. Other participants may be invited as needed.

**MEETINGS:**

The RSSC will meet three to four times annually. Special meetings may be necessary and will be scheduled at the call of the co-chairs.

**SECRETARIAT:**

To be provided by the HC/CFIA Joint Secretariat.

Approved by:

*(originally signed by)*

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Diane Gorman  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Health Products and Food Branch  
Health Canada

Date:

*December 12, 2002*

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*(originally signed by)*

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Peter Brackenridge  
Vice President  
Programs Branch  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency

Date:

*December 18, 2002*

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