

Soil Association

Standards Board

Summary of meeting held on 6-7 February 2008

Present

Board: Anna Bradley (Chair), Charles Weston, Russell Smart, Isobel Collyer, Alistair Cruikshank, Ian Bretman, Andrew Whitley, John Newman, Jo Fairley, Jenny Usher.

Other chairs in attendance: William Lana, Jill Vaughan, Simon Wright.

Staff in attendance: Steve Belton, Peter Melchett, Francis Blake, Isabel Griffiths, Hannah Brooke, Ken Hayes.

Apologies: None.

1. General introductions and some background

The chair welcomed everyone to the first meeting of the newly constituted standards board.

2. Work planning

After much discussion, the board agreed the following priority areas for 2008-10¹.

Work area	Responsible committee	Decision
Animal welfare	Agriculture	Start to investigate using outcome-based standards, including applicability, scope, timetable and implementation; initial emphasis on poultry and dairy cattle issues in particular, tying in with SACL's outcomes work and helping to shape that; preparation during 2008, taking forward in 2009; publish a statement of intent along these lines.
Processing principles and methods	Processing	Produce a green paper that explores what it would mean to put our processing principles into practice; to open up debate about the implications and how far to go down this path; use examples to provide case studies, including bread and additives/processing aids; initial scoping and exploration in 2008, taking forward in 2009 (depending on the outcome).
Airfreight	Standards board	Continue following through the second round consultation; aim for final decision in July.
Ethical trade	Standards board taskforce	Continue reviewing implementation as full standards, including further streamlining, equivalence with other fair trade standards; start to look at the possibilities of integrating into the general standards.
Health & Beauty	Health Products	Continue working with European partners on producing common standards.
Labelling and the EU logo	Standards board	Consult on the SA response to the new EU logo; aim for final decision in July.
Primary habitat	Standards board	Reach final conclusion on the proposed standard, aim for final decision in July.
Glasshouse	Horticulture	Convene a meeting of the committee and glasshouse working group to respond to the expected ACOS proposals; aim to review more detailed standards for protected cropping in 2009.

¹ The work plan is available online soon.

Therefore the following committees will be active in 2008: agriculture, processing, health products, ethical trade (taskforce). There will be single meetings of the 'resting' committees: horticulture, textiles, aquaculture.

NB the board agreed that declared interests of standards board members should go on the website.

3. Standards Proposals

Airfreight - the board agreed the draft standards for airfreight to go forward for consultation, with minor amendments².

Aquaculture – the board approved the following amendments to the aquaculture standards:

- for immediate implementation (subject to council approval), the amendment allowing phaffia yeast up to 10ppm in the feed;
- for consultation, other minor amendments³.

4. Grower representation

Following correspondence from the chair of the producer board and other discussions, the meeting agreed that grower representation on the standards board should be by appointment from the grower community, in the same way that the lay members have been appointed (advertise, interview, recommendation, council approval).

² The airfreight proposals are available at <http://www.soilassociation.org/airfreight>

³ The aquaculture amendments are available at <http://www.soilassociation.org/consultation>