Working Group

Paper 10.3 Economics Working Group - Update (February 2023)

Summary

This paper provides an update on the Economics Working Group. It summarises background, key activities and future action. This paper is for information and discussion.

Background

The ACSS Economics working group was set up in December 2021 following discussion of a proposition paper at the 8th ACSS plenary meeting.

The Agency is heavily committed to acting proportionately and basing its decisions on the best available evidence: economics has a key role to play in helping to develop the Agency’s policy and regulatory responses. Demand for economic input has increased over recent years with increased information requirements (in terms of regulatory impact assessments, risk assessments and economic evaluations) as well as the need for timely economic steers on rapidly emerging issues and key areas of potential research interest1.This working group will support an interdisciplinary approach to ensuring economic principles are effectively applied in the work of the economic teams. It will support FSA economists in keeping up to date with empirical approaches and analytical methods that can be applied in the area of food, and facilitate identification of experts and appropriate networks.

The main aim of the group is to:

- Provide advice and guidance on economic analysis and guidance activities taking place under the management of the Analytics Unit, and

- Support the economic team keep abreast of economic research activity and developments.

Members

The Working Group is comprised of the following members:

- Professor Spencer Henson (Chair)
- Dr. Seda Erdem
- Professor Dan Rigby

Terms of reference

The group will meet quarterly to:

- Provide advice and guidance on economic analysis and guidance activities taking place under the management of the Analytics Unit. Specifically:
- review the portfolio of current and planned work, identifying areas/topics where the working group can usefully add value/contribute;
- consider what work has already been undertaken in the field of economic research pertaining to relevant areas of food safety policy and identify evidence gaps that can be addressed by further economic research;
- provide input to appraisal panels/steering groups for specific projects or initiatives to ensure projects use appropriate economic techniques and analyse wherever applicable, before they are commissioned;
- feed into relevant briefings, business cases (economic case), evaluations, risk assessments and impact assessments (where appropriate and time permits).

- Support the economic team keep abreast of economic research activity and developments. Specifically helping to identify:

- external project(s) and/or programme(s) which may provide evidence in support of the Agency’s strategic objectives;

- developments in empirical analysis approaches and analytical methods, including techniques that are being seen in other areas but have not yet been applied to food safety;

- relevant intellectual developments in food system economics.

Key activities to date

- Since its inception the Economics working group has agreed TORs, reviewed the Econ work plan for the next FY, and attended quarterly review meetings.

- Members have also reviewed monthly update on substantive econ work.

Current activities:

The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for the 24th Jan.

Professor Spencer Henson, Chair - ACSS Economics Working Group

Nicholas Daniel, FSA lead - ACSS Economics Working Group