

We went to Brussels to go around the merry-go-round of the Novel Foods Working Group (NFWG) We've been here before, of course, three times - once to present and twice for meetings. Each time we've found SANTE, the administrators of the Novel Foods Register, very supportive, but unable to change the minds of the Commission.

Excerpt taken from CTA Link (members newsletter)

'From the Chair', written by Mike Harlington -

March 2019 issue



I enjoyed an hour with the head honcho of SANTE and their legal counsel, the day before the main event - as is now our custom.

He talks passionately, he wants to see the industry succeed, when the catalogue changed in January he rang me apologising for being about to ruin my birthday by telling me he was not comfortable with the change to the NFR.

We have a very good working relationship with SANTE. We were congratulated on bringing the European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA) to see things from our point of view, getting them to present evidence and us to present the factual

information and the financial implications of what would happen without cannabinoids in foods being available.

Yes, it was exhausting, yes it was great to see the faces of so many “adversaries” around one table, so many people we have been dealing with around Europe for a long time. It was sad to see the UK side-lined for a working group, this could be the last time they actively participate in an EU Committee. The irony was not lost on us, we're primarily a UK organisation, albeit now one representing 15 member states and several other countries too. But if the UK crashes out, it's a sad day.



From Left to right - Daniel Kruse - Board Member, EIHA; Jonathan Kirk QC from Gough Square Chambers; Tony Reeves Advisory Board Member EIHA; Lorenza Romanese Managing Director of EIHA; Mike Harlington Chairman CTA, and Tom Whettem, Marketing Director CTA - Behind the lens... Robert Jappie, Mackrell Turner Garrett Lawyers.

We went into an hour-long committee meeting, that lasted almost three. The NFWG unlike any other time were shocked at the evidence presented - the EIHA presentation and the CTA submission by the QC. Never has a trade body taken a lawyer let alone a QC whose specialist area of law is foods, into the EU chamber.

They were still in awe of a video showing the basic process of creating CBD oils...how simple it actually was and how it couldn't possibly be Novel.

We talked about regulation, we talked about how important it was for the industry to be professional and ensure we get rid of the bad sellers and the bystanders, who advocate for products but haven't a clue how to deal with the authorities.

It has been the Commissions habit picking holes in everything presented to them. Not this time. We answered each and every question between the panel of EIHA and CTA, working as a team.