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A team from US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and senior officials from the European Commission who are responsible for food and pharmaceutical regulation concluded a two-day meeting in Brussels last week. The meeting was the first in a series of twice-yearly meetings which aim at scientific and technical cooperation in order to benefit from an exchange of mutual experience in the following regulatory areas :

- Food
- Human and Veterinary Medicines
- Human biologics
- Medical devices

Led by FDA Commissioner Frank Young, the U.S. Team was composed of Stuart Nightingale, Associate Commissioner for Health Affairs, and six senior executives of the FDA.

Emphasizing the importance of the discussions, Mr. Tom Garvey, who led the Commission team in the talks, said that a major element of good regulation of food and medicines was the achievement of the highest level of scientific evaluation. It was viewed by both sides as gratifying that scientists and experts from both the US and the European Community should now have a regular forum in which to exchange information and discuss matters of mutual interest. The resultant broadening of the scientific base is seen as enabling both sides to exercise their role of public protection more effectively.

At the conclusion of the talks, Commissioner Young said : "The opportunity to discuss the scientific issues related to sound regulation was both timely and important. We look forward to identifying areas that are suitable for harmonization based on these scientific principles."

The Commission side was assisted over the two days of talks by experts and scientists from Member States including Dr. C. Van der Heljden, Chairman of the EC Scientific Committee for Food.

The next meeting will take place in Washington in the Spring of 1990.