

Committed *since 2002*  
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe



European Food Safety Authority

# How do we communicate about risks?

**Laura Smillie**

**Communications Directorate**

**“Analisi del rischio sanitario legato alla modernizzazione  
Della ispezione delle carni”**

**11 Maggio a Parma**

## Purpose

Provide appropriate, consistent, accurate and timely communications on food safety issues to all interested parties, stakeholders and the public at large, based on the Authority's risk assessments and scientific expertise

# Growing media interest

Dow Jones Newswires

Efsa soll Anbau von  
MON810 neu bewerten



EFSA report on  
antimicrobial  
resistance affecting  
food



**SALUTE: SICUREZZA  
ALIMENTARE;  
L'EFSA COMPIE 10  
ANNI**



Committed since 2002  
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe



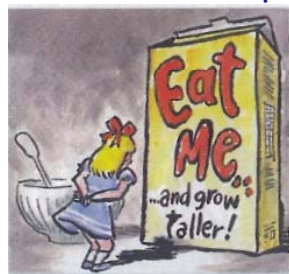
EU food pesticide residue levels  
fall -EFSA



FRANCE/E.COLI : L'EFSA  
RECOMMANDE LA CUISSON DES  
GRAINES GERMÉES



The proof of the pudding



**SANTÉ ANIMALE:  
rapport de l'EFSA  
sur le virus de  
Schmallenberg**



Current EU meat  
inspection  
measures do not  
address human  
health risks - EFSA

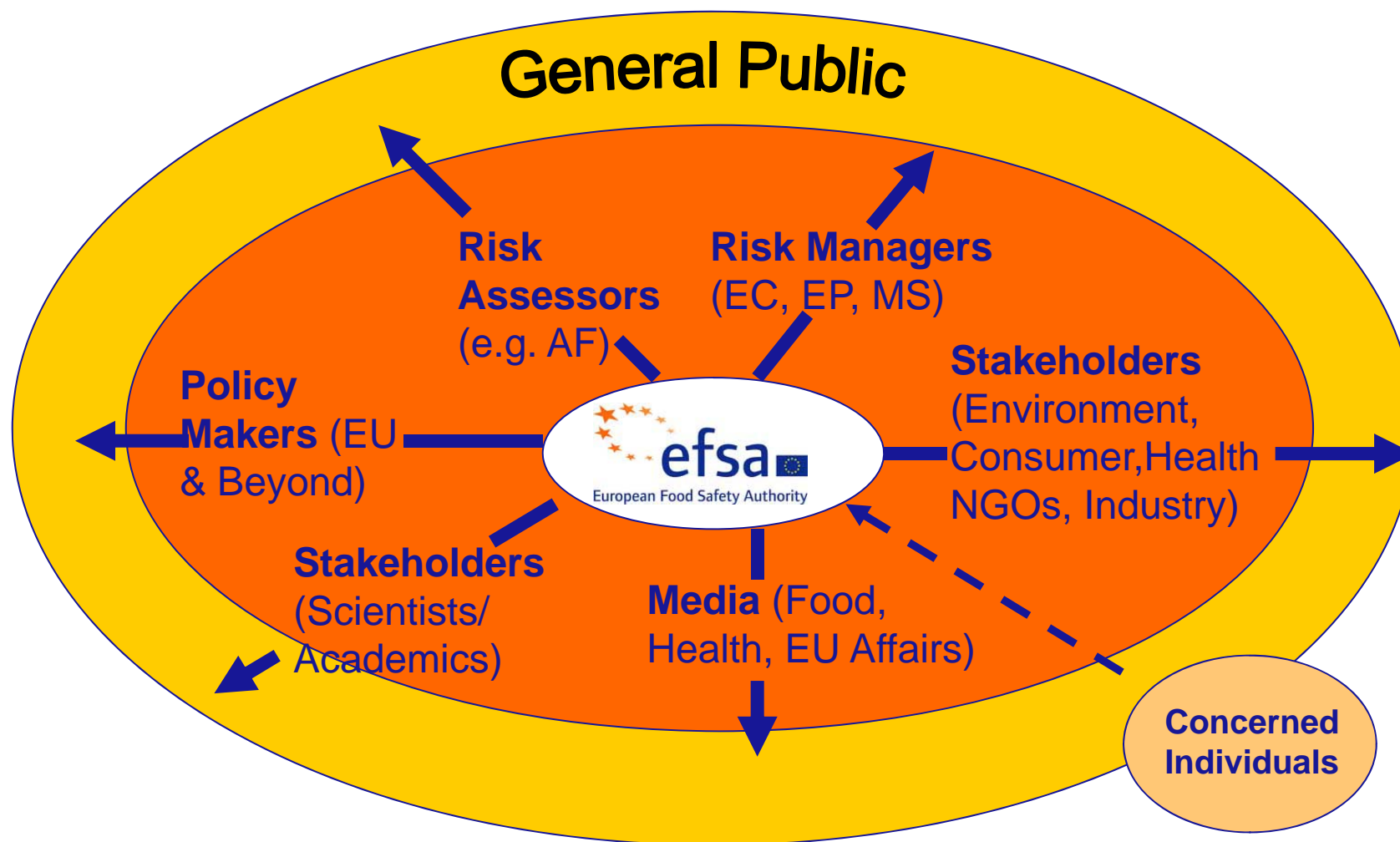
**EL PAÍS**

La UE rechaza el 80% de los  
reclamos sanitarios de los  
alimentos



EFSA: daling  
salmonella,  
stijging  
campylobacter

# Who does EFSA communicate to?

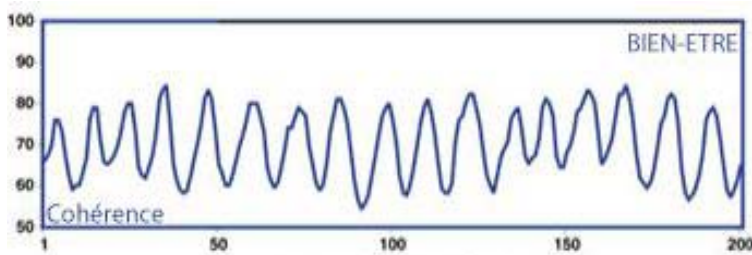


# How we work



Understand **CONSUMER PERCEPTION**  
of food and food safety risks  
(Eurobarometer report, 2006 and 2010)

Bridge the **GAP** between  
science and the  
consumer (Advisory  
Group on Risk Comm)



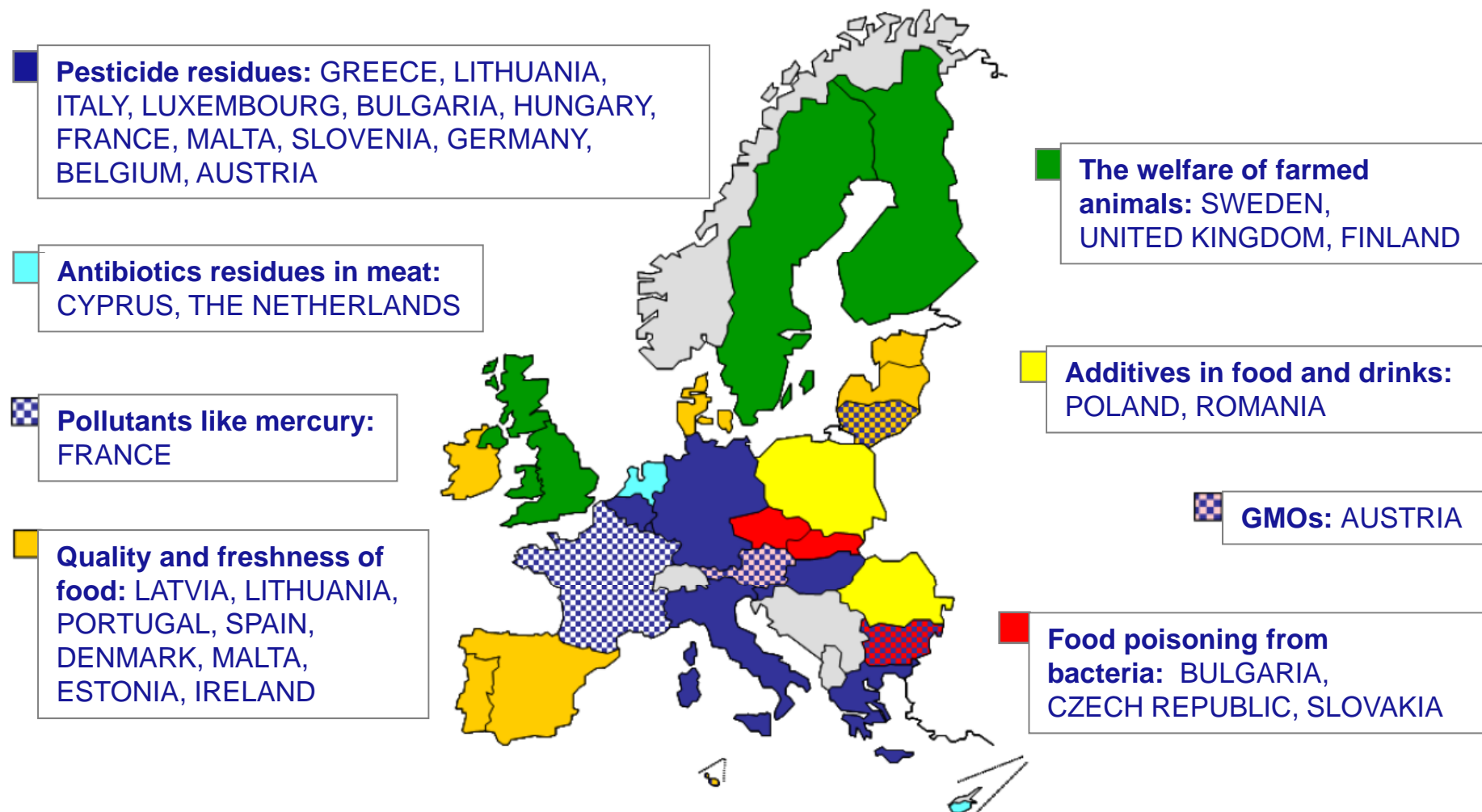
Promote **COHERENT** risk communications  
(Advisory Forum WG on Comm Pre-  
notification of press releases)



Committed *since 2002*  
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe

# Risk perception: Country differences

## Top concerns in Member States





# Key strategic priorities 2010-2013

- **Simplicity and transparency:** increase relevance and understanding of EFSA communications for key target audiences and informed lay audiences, in co-operation with MS
- **Independence:** augment proactive communications on the independence of EFSA's risk assessment advice
- **Visibility and outreach:** enhance outreach, in the EU and beyond (increase awareness and recognition of EFSA)
- **Coherence:** further increase... across EU and beyond
- **Dialogue:** enhance dialogue with stakeholders and increase audience interactivity

⇒ Support by continuing to **strengthen capacity** for effective risk communications



# Moving forward: Implementing a thematic approach

## Integrated communications plans:

- across all tools and channels
- themes reflecting both consumer concerns & public health priorities
- continuous “campaign” approach with key milestones (eg. zoonoses: annual report, baseline surveys, opinions of BIOHAZ, AHAW,...)
- covering all relevant aspects of EFSA’s work in an area





# Thematic approach: Why Zoonoses

EFSA's work on Zoonoses is a positive story to tell.

It is:

- a very important risk to public health
- concerns all actors (risk assessors & managers, EU MS, Stakeholders)
- a crucial part of EFSA's work
- a story where all work together to solve it

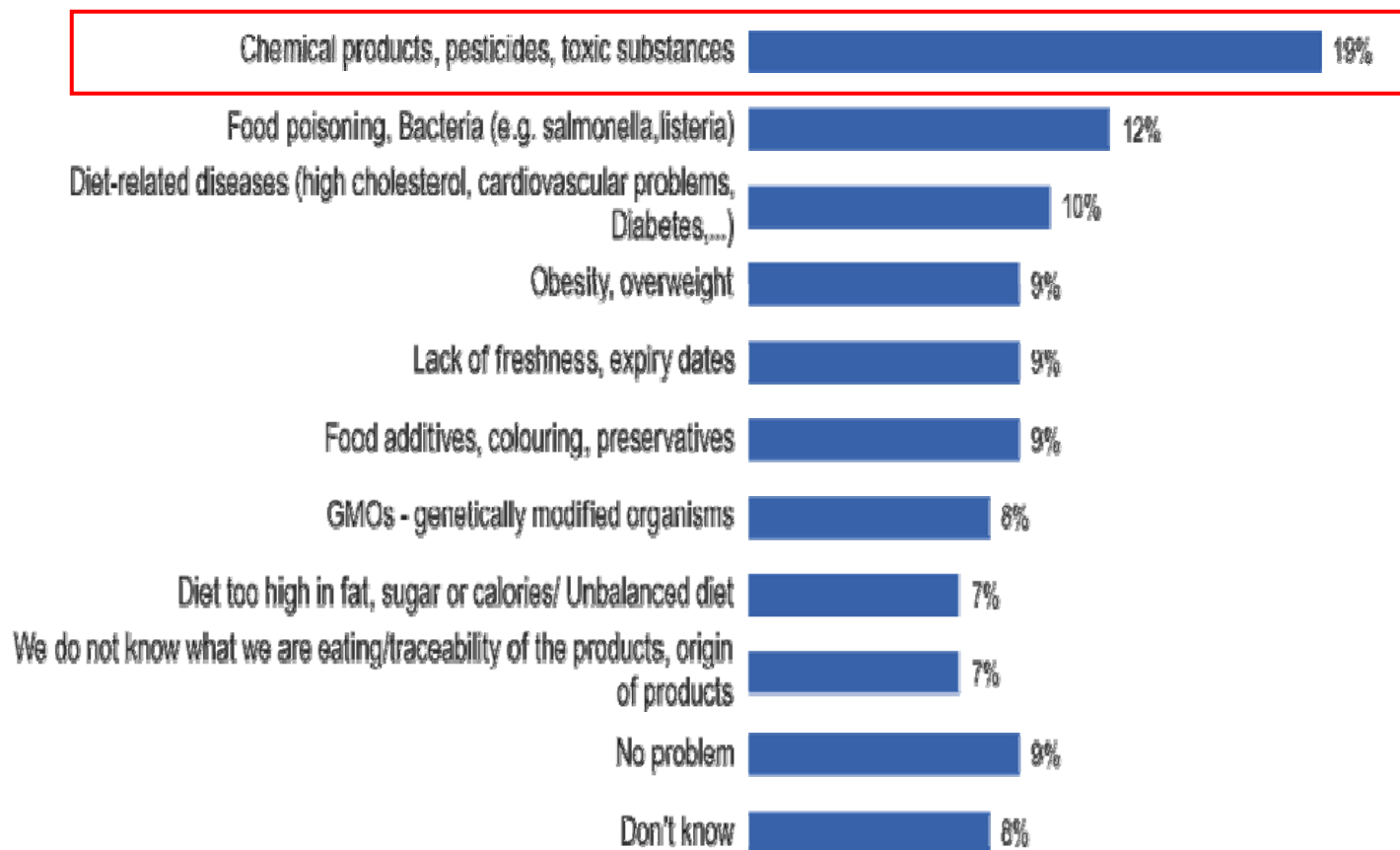
The communications issue:

- The positive story is not known
- Positive news travels less well
- Avoid country "league table" comparisons



# EU consumers more concerned about chemical than biological hazards

**Chemical products, pesticides and other toxic substances are the major concerns**



EU27

Source: 2010 Eurobarometer on Food-related Risks

**QF3:** Could you tell me in your own words, what are all the things that come to your mind when thinking about possible problems or risks associated with food and eating?

# Public health: bringing the themes to life online



European Food Safety Authority  
Committed since 2002 to ensuring that Europe's food is safe



de en fr it

Search site Go

About EFSA | News & events | Topics A-Z | Publications | Panels & units | Cooperation | Applications helpdesk | Calls & consultations



## In focus: Zoonotic diseases

### EFSA and ECDC report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic bacteria

EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control have published the second joint report on antimicrobial resistance in zoonotic bacteria affecting humans, animals and food. The report makes an important contribution to current work being carried out at EU-level to fight antimicrobial resistance.

- Press release
- Scientific report

#### EFSA's work in context

News: EFSA and ECDC: *Salmonella* in humans continues to decrease, *Campylobacter* increasing

Topic: Zoonotic diseases

Topic: Antimicrobial Resistance

Factsheet: EFSA explains zoonotic diseases: Antimicrobial Resistance

#### Understanding science



What is antimicrobial resistance?  
How is it related to food safety?

- Watch: What is *Campylobacter*?
- Watch: What is *Salmonella*?

Subscribe to our newsletters

Select -

#### Featured Topics

- Bisphenol A
- Independence
- Zoonotic diseases
- Aspartame
- Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* outbreak(s)

All topics



#### Stakeholder Consultative Platform

Call for interest - Membership

#### Shortcuts



Executive Director

News

# Joint EU action to protect consumers

## Community Summary Report

Trends and Sources of Zoonoses and Zoonotic Agents and Food-borne Outbreaks in the European Union in 2008



April 2009



## Press releases RAPID

EUROPA > Press Room > Press Releases



Login



Register



Documentation



About

Search

RSS

Midday Express

Recent Press Releases

Select a topic


## Salmonellosis : EU measures helped reduce human cases almost by half in 5 years, report confirms

Reference: IP/11/340 Date: 22/03/2011

HTML: EN FR DE

PDF: EN FR DE

DOC: EN FR DE



efsa  
European Food Safety Authority  
Committed to ensuring that Europe's food is safe

de en fr it

Search site Go

About EFSA News Publications Panels & units Cooperation Calls & consultations Events Topics A-Z

Home > News > Press releases & news stories > EFSA and ECDC zoonoses report shows Salmon...

Print

### EFSA and ECDC zoonoses report shows Salmonella in humans falls for fifth consecutive year

Press Release  
22 March 2011

See also

- Topic: Food-borne diseases
- Zoonoses homepage

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their annual report on zoonoses[1] and food-borne outbreaks in the European Union for 2009. The report shows *Salmonella* cases in humans fell by 17% in 2009, marking a decrease for the fifth consecutive year. The report also shows that between 2008 and 2009 the number of laying hen flocks infected with *Salmonella*[2] fell by 9%.

Campylobacteriosis remained the most reported zoonotic disease in humans, showing a slight increase with 198,252 cases in 2009 compared to 190,566 in 2008 (+4%). In foodstuffs, *Campylobacter*, which can cause diarrhoea and fever, was mostly found in raw poultry meat; and in live animals, it was found in poultry, pigs and cattle.

"The fall in *Salmonella* cases in humans is a great achievement and indicates that the control measures put in place by EU Member States and the European Commission are working. EFSA, in cooperation with its partners, will continue to support all efforts to reduce all zoonotic diseases across the EU," said Hubert Deluyker, EFSA's Director of Scientific Cooperation and Assistance.

Andrea Ammon, Head of Surveillance Unit at ECDC, added: "Combining surveillance of disease in humans with information from food and animals provides invaluable information that allows the European Commission to target control measures effectively across Europe. ECDC will continue to collaborate intensively with all partners in order to decrease the occurrence of these diseases."

The report says that the reduction targets[3] set by the European Commission to reduce the spread of *Salmonella* in poultry, eggs[4] and chicken meat are likely to be the main reasons for the reduction in the number of human cases. The report states that in 2009 17 Member States met their *Salmonella* reduction targets for laying hens[5] and that the proportion of EU laying hen flocks infected with the targeted *Salmonella* types continued to fall (3.2% in 2009 compared to 3.5% in 2008).

*Salmonella*, which is the second most reported zoonotic infection in humans, accounted for 108,614 human cases in 2009 compared to 131,488 in 2008. The illness it causes, salmonellosis, usually involves fever, diarrhoea and abdominal cramps. For more vulnerable groups, like small children and the elderly,

IP/11/340

Brussels, 22nd March 2011

## Salmonellosis : EU measures helped reduce human cases almost by half in 5 years, report confirms

Human salmonellosis cases were reduced almost by half over a five-year period, from 196,000 cases in 2004 to 108,000 cases in 2009, thanks to measures introduced by the European Union, a report confirms. The 2009 EU summary report on zoonoses is published today by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). The success story, as documented by this report, dates back to 2003 when the European Parliament and the Council adopted a Regulation which signalled the start of the implementation of enhanced *Salmonella* control programmes in all Member States. In flocks of poultry (e.g. laying hens, broilers, turkeys) targets for reduction of *Salmonella* were set, Member States introduced control programmes and restrictions on the trade of products from infected flocks were imposed.

John Dalli, Commissioner in charge of Health and Consumer Policy said: "The EU has made great strides in its battle against *Salmonella* and the consistent fall in the number of cases is testament to the strong, comprehensive measures put in place by the Member States to tackle this disease. The Commission has at no point stopped monitoring or reacting to the challenge of *Salmonella* and the current EFSA/ECDC report clearly illustrates the improved situation and positive developments". To conclude : "The European consumers must rest assured that the fight against zoonotic agents will continue relentlessly, always aiming to further reduce their incidence."

### What is salmonellosis ? :

Human salmonellosis is usually characterised by the acute onset of fever, abdominal pain, nausea, and sometimes vomiting. Symptoms are often mild and most infections are self-limiting, lasting a few days. However, in some patients, the infection may be more serious and the associated dehydration can be life threatening. In 2010, EFSA estimated the overall burden of human salmonellosis in the EU



# New Topics A-Z model



The screenshot displays the EFSA website's 'Topics A-Z' section for Campylobacter. The left sidebar shows a hierarchical menu: Zoonotic diseases > Food-borne zoonotic diseases > Campylobacter. The main content area features the EFSA logo, a search bar, and a navigation bar with links to About EFSA, News & events, Topics A-Z (active), Publications, Panels & units, Cooperation, Applications helpdesk, and Calls & tenders. Below the navigation bar, a breadcrumb trail reads: Home > Topics A-Z > Zoonotic diseases > Food-borne zoonotic diseases > Campylobacter. The main heading is 'Campylobacter'. A photograph shows hands washing produce. The text states: 'Campylobacter is a bacterium that can cause an illness called campylobacteriosis in humans. With over 190,000 human cases annually, this disease is the **most frequently reported food-borne illness** in the European Union (EU). However, the actual number of cases is believed to be around nine million each year. The cost of campylobacteriosis to public health systems and to lost productivity in the EU is estimated by EFSA to be around EUR 2.4 billion a year.' A 'See also' box lists 'Biological Monitoring' and 'Panel on Biological Hazards (BIOHAZ)'. A paragraph explains the 'integrated approach to food safety' from farm to fork, involving EU Member States, the European Commission, EFSA, and the ECDC. Another paragraph notes EFSA's role in providing independent scientific support. A final paragraph defines zoonosis and lists common symptoms and sources of infection, mentioning that EFSA has found that children and children's meat are the most common sources of infection.



Committed since 2002  
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe



# New information tools


**EFSA explains ZOOONOTIC DISEASES**

**FOOD-BORNE ZOONOSSES**

**What are zoonoses?**

- Zoonoses are infectious or toxic diseases that can be transmitted directly or indirectly between animals and humans. The exposure to contaminated foodstuffs or through contact with infected animals.
- Research indicates that between one third and one half of all human infectious diseases have a zoonotic origin, that is, are transmitted from animals. About 25% of the new diseases that have affected humans over the past 10 years (such as the new flu, swine flu) are originated from animals or products of animal origin.
- Food-borne zoonoses are a significant and widespread public health threat. More than 325,000 human cases are confirmed in the European Union each year, but the real number is likely to be much higher.
- Human salmonella cases were reduced by almost one-half from 2004 to 2006 thanks to the coordinated action of all EU actors.
- The European Food Safety Authority's independent scientific advice on the food safety and animal health-related aspects of zoonotic diseases supported by data collected in Member States help European decision-makers in setting policies and making decisions to protect consumers from this public health threat.

"Europe's integrated approach to controlling zoonoses has contributed to a decrease in the number of zoonotic diseases reported in the EU, thanks to the coordinated action of all EU actors."

 **EFSA's independent scientific advice on zoonotic diseases**

**EFSA explains ZOOONOTIC DISEASES**

**Zoonotic E. coli**

**What is zoonotic E. coli?**

- Escherichia coli* (E. coli) is a bacterium that is found in the gastrointestinal tract of humans and most warm-blooded animals, and which is part of the normal flora. However, some E. coli strains can cause diseases and lead to serious illness.
- VTEC/STEC (verotoxin- or shiga toxin-producing E. coli) strains have the potential to cause bloody diarrhoea and haemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS) in humans, a complication that can be fatal. A virulent, rare strain of VTEC known as O157, identified as the source of the E. coli outbreaks that struck Germany and France in spring and summer of 2011.
- Humans are infected with VTEC by consuming or handling contaminated water or through contact with infected animals. Person-to-person transmission is also possible among close contacts (in families, child-care centres, nursing homes, etc.). A wide variety of food has been implicated in outbreaks, including (but not limited to) milk and cheese, undercooked beef and a variety of fresh (such as sprouts, spinach and lettuce).
- The main source of such infections in humans is cattle, particularly cattle. The bacteria become contaminated by faeces due to poor processing methods, slaughter, faeces from infected animals, or contact with other foods.

**EFSA explains ZOOONOTIC DISEASES**

**Antimicrobial Resistance**

**What is antimicrobial resistance?**

- Antimicrobials, such as antibiotics, are substances used to kill micro-organisms or to stop them from growing and multiplying. They are commonly used in humans and animals to treat a wide variety of infectious diseases.
- Antimicrobial resistance refers to the ability of micro-organisms to withstand antimicrobial treatments. A well-known example of a bacterium that is resistant to multiple antibiotics is methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA).
- The overuse or misuse of antibiotics has been linked to the emergence and spread of micro-organisms that are resistant to them, rendering treatment ineffective and increasing the risk of death.

**EFSA explains ZOOONOTIC DISEASES**

**Salmonella**

**What is Salmonella?**

- Salmonella is a bacterium that can cause an illness called salmonellosis in humans. In the European Union (EU), over 100,000 human cases are reported each year. EFSA has estimated that the overall economic burden of human salmonellosis could be as high as EUR 3 billion a year.
- Salmonella is commonly found in the intestines of healthy birds and mammals. In foods, it is most frequently found in eggs and raw meat from pigs, turkeys and chickens. It can spread to humans through contaminated foods.
- Usual symptoms of human salmonellosis include fever, diarrhoea and abdominal cramps. If it affects the bloodstream it can be life-threatening. Safe handling of raw meat and other raw food ingredients, thorough cooking and good kitchen hygiene can prevent or reduce the risk posed by contaminated foods.

**How EFSA supports the EU's fight against Salmonella**

The European Food Safety Authority provides independent scientific support and advice through the collection and analysis of data on the prevalence of Salmonella in animals and food, as well as by assessing the food safety risks posed by the bacterium for human health, and advising on possible control and mitigation options. EFSA findings are used by risk managers in the EU and the Member States to help inform policy, and to support the setting of possible reduction targets for Salmonella in the food chain.

**EU-wide surveys on prevalence of Salmonella**

To ascertain the current situation, EFSA produces EU-wide baseline survey reports on the prevalence of Salmonella in food and food-producing animals, including chickens, turkeys and pigs, and on the risk factors that contribute to the prevalence of Salmonella in animal populations and in food. The findings are used by risk managers such as the EFSA Panel on Biological Hazards to provide risk estimates and also by risk managers to define possible control options and/or reduction targets.

**Risk assessments and recommendations**

EFSA's Panel on Biological Hazards evaluates the food safety risks of Salmonella and provides scientific advice on control options at the request of risk managers or on its own initiative. EFSA also assesses the impact of setting new EU-wide reduction targets for Salmonella in various animals. This work helps the European Commission and the Member States to monitor the situation and consider possible measures of reduction targets set for Salmonella in the food chain.

EFSA is assisted in its work by the Scientific Panel on Biological Hazards composed of 21 independent experts on biological hazards in the food chain and by the Task Force on Zoonoses Data Collection, a pan-European network of national representatives of EU Member States, other reporting countries, as well as the World Health Organisation (WHO) and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).

**Annual monitoring of Salmonella in animals and food to measure progress**

EU-wide data on the prevalence of Salmonella in the food chain as well as the prevalence of animal and human infections are collected and analysed in annual EU Summary Reports prepared by EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).

**WHAT ARE ZOOONOTIC DISEASES?**


Zoonoses are infectious or toxic diseases that can be transmitted directly or indirectly between animals and humans. The exposure to contaminated foodstuffs or through contact with infected animals.

Zoonotic diseases are a significant and widespread public health threat. More than 325,000 human cases are confirmed in the European Union each year, but the real number is likely to be much higher.

**FoodWorld**

Just another WordPress.com site

HOME ABOUT



← [FDA – Starts Testing Pet Food](#)      [Salmonella Contamination of Paan/Betel Leaves](#) →

**ARCHIVES**

Select Month

**EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION**

Enter your email address to subscribe to this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

Join 34 other followers

## European Food Safety Authority Fact Sheets

Posted on November 4, 2011 | 1 Comment

You may find one or more of these fact sheets from the EFSA useful. They are quite brief and relatively easy to digest.

[Campylobacter](#)

[Salmonella](#)

[Antimicrobial Resistance](#)

# Events 2011 - 2012



Joint EFSA-ECDC-DG Sanco event at the European Parliament

## International Conference on Animal Health Surveillance

Lyon, France - 17th to 20th May, 2011

ICAHS International Conference on Animal Health Surveillance



ESCAIDE - European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology



13th Conference of the International Society for Veterinary Epidemiology

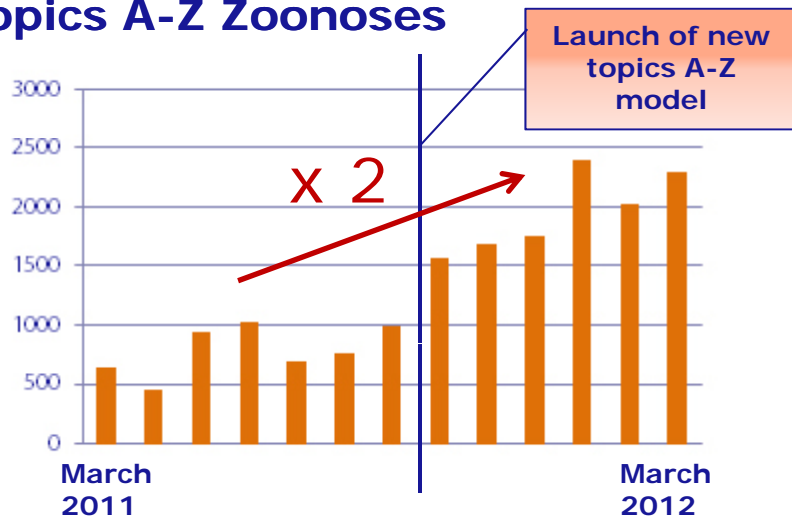


Safepork 9th International Conference on the Epidemiology and Control of hazards in pigs and porks

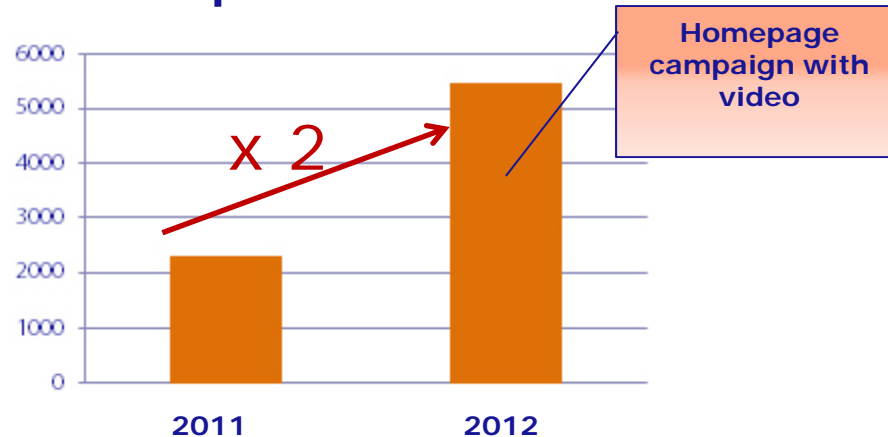


# Zoonoses – what have we achieved?

## Topics A-Z Zoonoses



## AMR – press release



## Share of voice zoonoses

Significant increase in share of voice for zoonoses in EFSA-related media coverage:

4⇒9 % in 2011; 27% incl *E.coli*



Committed since 2002  
to ensuring that Europe's food is safe





**THANK YOU!**

**YOUR  
THOUGHTS?**

**QUESTIONS?**

