



Salmonella

1. What is **Salmonella**?

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

3. Joint efforts have significantly reduced human **salmonellosis**

4. Scientific **cooperation**

1. What is **Salmonella**?

- *Salmonella* is a bacterium that can cause an illness called salmonellosis in humans. In the European Union over 90,000 salmonellosis cases are reported every 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.
- Risk of infection in humans is associated with the consumption of **contaminated food**, mainly eggs and pig meat and, to a lesser extent, poultry meat.
- Usual symptoms include fever, diarrhoea and abdominal cramps.

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

The European Food Safety Authority provides independent scientific support and advice by collecting and analysing data on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in animals and foods, assessing the food safety risks posed by the bacterium for human health and advising on possible control and mitigation options. EFSA's findings are used by risk managers in the EU and the Member States in their decision-making and support the setting of reduction targets for *Salmonella* in the food chain.

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

The occurrence of *Salmonella* in humans, animals and food is monitored and analysed in EU Summary Reports prepared by EFSA and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) each year to provide up-to-date information on the current situation in Europe.

■ **Risk assessments and recommendations**

EFSA evaluates the risks for public health from infected animals and provides recommendations and advice on control and reduction measures. For example, EFSA has provided advice on reduction targets in poultry and poultry meat and the use of vaccines and antimicrobials for the control of *Salmonella*.

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

EFSA has analysed the results of EU-wide baseline surveys on the prevalence of *Salmonella* in food and food-producing animals, including the risk factors that contribute to its prevalence in animal populations and food.



3. Joint efforts have significantly reduced human salmonellosis

To combat human salmonellosis it is important to reduce *Salmonella* in animals and derived products so that food is safer for consumers. The EU set up comprehensive control measures for zoonoses, considering *Salmonella* as a priority. Enhanced *Salmonella* programmes in poultry were implemented in all EU Member States and targets were set for reducing the bacteria in poultry flocks (laying hens, broilers and turkeys).

EFSA plays an important role in protecting consumers from this public health threat by providing independent scientific support and advice on human health and food safety-related aspects of *Salmonella* and by monitoring progress.

The coordinated approach by all EU actors has had significant results: human *Salmonella* cases fell by almost 50% in the EU over five years (2004-2009). Since then cases of *Salmonella* have continued to fall.

4. Scientific cooperation

- **EFSA and ECDC** use data collected from individual Member States to monitor and analyse the situation with regard to zoonoses, antimicrobial resistance and food-borne outbreaks in Europe. The results are presented in the annual EU Summary Reports on zoonoses, food-borne outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance.
- EFSA and its **network on zoonoses data collection** work openly and transparently to deliver timely scientific data and analysis of the highest standards to support risk assessors and the policies and decisions of risk managers. The network comprises representatives

of Member States, other reporting countries as well as the European Commission, the World Health Organization, and the World Organisation for Animal Health.

- EFSA's **Panel on Biological Hazards** provides independent scientific advice on biological hazards in relation to food safety and food-borne diseases. The Panel has produced a number of risk assessments concerning *Salmonella*.

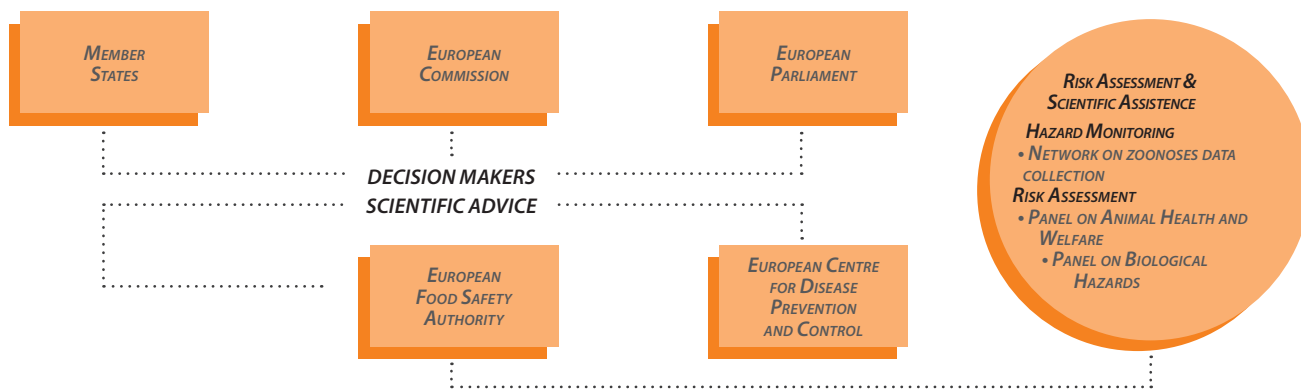


Diagram: EU actors dealing with zoonoses

Did you know?

- *Salmonella* is the most frequently reported cause of foodborne outbreaks with known origin in the EU.
- Most Member States have met their *Salmonella* reduction target for poultry flocks.
- Consumers can reduce the risk of falling ill from potentially contaminated food by following good hand hygiene and food handling practices. These include refrigerating foods promptly; regularly washing hands and surfaces such as cutting boards and dishes, separating raw meats from other foods; cooking food to the right temperatures.