

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD CONSULTATION

### Title: THIRD REPORT ON *CAMPYLOBACTER* CONSULTATION SUMMARY PAGE

<b>Date launched:</b>	<b>7 MARCH 2019</b>	<b>Closing date:</b>	<b>16 MAY 2019</b>
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#### Who will this consultation be of most interest to?

This consultation will be of most interest to health care practitioners, the food industry, consumer bodies and government departments with an interest on the issue of *Campylobacter* infection in humans.

#### What is the subject of this consultation?

The Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) report: Third report on *Campylobacter*.

#### What is the purpose of this consultation?

The ACMSF is inviting stakeholders views on their draft report. In particular, they would welcome comments on the report's conclusions and recommendations. Comments specifically on risk management are not within the remit of the Committee and are therefore not within the scope of this consultation.

The Committee returned to review *Campylobacter* over a decade after its Second Report on this organism because of the continued dominance of *Campylobacter* as a leading bacterial cause of foodborne disease in the UK. ACMSF would welcome comments, information or observations on the review particularly material that the report should include or address and information on the latest science and any observation on the conclusions and recommendations made in the report. In producing its report, the ACMSF has focussed on the UK situation and have drawn on the international scientific literature where appropriate.

#### Responses to this consultation should be sent to:

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Microbiological Risk Assessment Branch, ACMSF  
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<b>Impact Assessment included?</b>	<b>Yes</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>See paragraph 7</b>
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# ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD'S (ACMSF) REPORT: THIRD REPORT ON *CAMPYLOBACTER*

## DETAIL OF CONSULTATION

### Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food (ACMSF) is a scientific advisory committee that provides the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with independent expert advice. This helps the Agency ensure that policy development and consumer advice in relation to the microbiological safety of food are based upon sound science and relevant practical experience and expertise. The Committee's terms of reference are to assess the risk to humans from microorganisms which are used or occur in or on food and to advise the FSA on any matters relating to the microbiological safety of food.
2. In June 2015, the FSA and ACMSF agreed that as it was 10 years since the Committee issued its last report on *Campylobacter* in the food chain, an expert subgroup should be set up to revisit this area and provide a more up to date picture.
3. The ACMSF Ad Hoc Group on *Campylobacter* consisting of ACMSF members and members co-opted for their expertise met for the first time in May 2016 and met eight times. Other activities of the group were carried out via correspondence.
4. The Ad Hoc Group's terms of reference were to assess the actions that had taken place since the publication of the Second *Campylobacter* Report and to make proposals to advise the FSA in evolving its strategy for reducing the incidence and risk of foodborne *Campylobacter* infection in humans.

## The Report

5. The Ad Hoc Group's draft report that represents the output of the members deliberations (**Annex B**) and updates the scientific evidence since the publication of the Second report on *Campylobacter* has been approved by the full Committee and is attached for comment. The structure of the report is as follows:
  - Summary gives an overview of the report;
  - Chapter 1: *Campylobacter* biology and tools for detection;
  - Chapters 2: *Campylobacter* genetics and genomics;
  - Chapters 3: Epidemiology of *Campylobacter* infection in humans;
  - Chapter 4: Source attribution of human campylobacteriosis;
  - Chapter 5: Risks in the food chain: Poultry;
  - Chapter 6: Risk in the food chain: measures to prevent *Campylobacter* contamination of chicken meat in Europe, New Zealand and the USA
  - Chapter 7: Risk in the food chain: Red meat, raw milk and fresh produce;
  - Chapter 8: People's attitudes and behaviours regarding risk (includes consumers, caterers, farmers and the food processing industry);
  - Chapter 9: How new knowledge influences risk assessment;
  - Chapter 10: Conclusions and recommendations;
  - Annex A: Terms of Reference and Membership of the Group
  - Annex B: Source attribution
  - Glossary
  - References
6. Key findings in the draft report include:
  - No single practical intervention has been shown to be capable of eliminating *Campylobacter* spp. or even reducing it to acceptable levels in the bird or during processing. Evidence, however, does show that levels can be reduced by a combination of farm and processing controls that include implementation of improved biosecurity measures on farm e.g. hygiene barriers in sheds, time-controlled depopulation and in the process e.g. optimisation of existing processing, application of thermal processing (hot or cold).
  - A number of processing techniques have been demonstrated to achieve significant reductions in *Campylobacter* spp. One of the most important elements in reducing contamination in the processing plant is optimisation of

current processing equipment to minimise spread of contamination e.g. plucking and to reduce contamination e.g. inside outside washing. Other technologies that have shown promise and where the industry is recommended to continue adoption and further investigation to enhance efficacy include thermal processing (water and steam) and rapid surface chilling

- The continued presence of *Campylobacter* spp. on chicken necessitates the ongoing education of the consumer in cooking and cross contamination controls
- A key factor in the initial success achieved by the industry in reducing the levels of *Campylobacter* spp. in UK chicken was a full supply chain approach and the importance of promoting an open, collaborative approach is recommended for this and other industry challenges.
- Red meat presents a low risk for food-borne transmission of pathogenic *Campylobacter* spp. to consumers. Available evidence indicates that existing process controls, especially chilling of carcasses, provide an effective means for control of *Campylobacter* along red meat supply chains. *The high prevalence of Campylobacter, including C. jejuni, among red meat livestock on farms combined with existing attribution data indicates that environmental, non-food borne, pathways for human infection likely exist.*
- Comprehensive and sustained improvements to reduce the risks posed by foodborne pathogens within domestic kitchens will require actions on a number of fronts. These include continuing development and application of advanced methods to refine our knowledge of the ecology of these organisms, as well as sustained progress in improving people's knowledge and practice within such environments.

## Engagement and Consultation Process

7. This consultation is being held for 10 weeks. **Comments are invited on any aspects of the draft report and its recommendations.** The report is not seeking to amend legislation or provide any guidance. Consultation is not accompanied by an impact assessment because ACMSF has no regulatory status. The finalised report will be submitted by ACMSF to the FSA and it is for the FSA to decide whether to accept the recommendations outlined in the report and whether to produce an impact assessment should the recommendations be accepted.
8. We aim to publish a summary of responses received within three months of the consultation ending. The ACMSF will review its draft report in the light of any comments received before submitting a final version to the FSA's Chief Scientist Team seeking approval for publication.

## **Responses**

9. **Responses are required by 6.00pm 16 May 2019.** Please state, in your response, whether you are responding as a private individual or on behalf of an organisation/company (including details of any stakeholders your organisation represents).

Thank you on behalf of the Food Standards Agency for participating in this public consultation.

Yours,

**Mr Adekunle Adeoye**

ACMSF Secretariat

Microbiological Risk Assessment Branch, ACMSF Secretariat

Science, Evidence and Research Division

### **Enclosed**

**Annex A: Standard Consultation Information**

**Annex B: Draft Report**

**Annex C: List of interested parties**

## **Annex A: Standard Consultation Information**

### **Disclosure of the information you provide**

Information provided in response to this consultation may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want information you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances.

Any automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding.

The Food Standards Agency will be what is known as the 'Controller' of the personal data provided to us.

### **Why we are collecting your personal data**

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

The Data Protection Act 2018 states that, as a government department, the Food Standards Agency/ACMSF Secretariat may process personal data as necessary for the effective performance of a task carried out in the public interest. i.e. a consultation.

### **What we do with it**

All the personal data we process is located on servers within the European Union. Our cloud based services have been procured through the government framework agreements and these services have been assessed against the national cyber security centre cloud security principles.

No third parties have access to your personal data unless the law allows them to do so. The Food Standards Agency/ACMSF Secretariat will sometimes share data with other government departments, public bodies, and organisations which perform public functions to assist them in the performance of their statutory duties or when it is in the public interest.

### **What are your rights?**

You have a right to see the information we hold on you by making a request in writing to the email address below. If at any point you believe the information we process on you is incorrect you can request to have it corrected. If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data not in accordance with the law you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) at <https://ico.org.uk/>, or telephone 0303 123 1113.

Our Data Protection Officer in the FSA is the Information Management and Security Team Leader who can be contacted at the following email address:  
[informationmanagement@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:informationmanagement@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk)

### **Further information**

If you require a more accessible format of this document please send details to the named contact for responses to this consultation and your request will be considered.

This consultation has been prepared in accordance with HM Government consultation principles<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance)