

ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD
INFORMATION PAPER

Update on outbreak of *E. coli* O157 in South Wales and subsequent developments – May 2008

Background

Following the South Wales *E.coli* O157 outbreak in September 2005, the National Assembly for Wales announced its intention to hold a full Public Inquiry. The Inquiry, which is chaired by Professor Hugh Pennington, heard evidence during six weeks of oral hearings earlier this year.

As part of the Inquiry's evidence gathering, the FSA and the Meat Hygiene Service (MHS) submitted witness statements and several members of staff gave oral evidence.

The Inquiry has asked the FSA/MHS for clarification on a number of points and further evidence will be submitted shortly.

Core participants in the Inquiry, including the FSA/MHS, have submitted closing written submissions. At a further public hearing on 14 May 2008, the Counsel for core participants were invited to make closing statements to highlight and clarify key points of their submission.

In his closing remarks on 14 May 2008, the Chair set out the first steps for phase 2 of the Inquiry, including:

- the Inquiry will write to public authority core participants to request statements of material changes that have occurred since the outbreak;
- the Chair intends to issue a note of emerging topics within which recommendations are likely to be considered, though he stressed that this would not be an indication of what the findings are likely to be; and
- the Inquiry will set up a programme of work to determine how organisations and individuals, who feel that they can contribute to phase 2 of the Inquiry, may best submit their views and comments.

Below is a link to the Inquiry website and to the "Transcript of Proceedings" page which gives full details of each day's evidence, including the hearing on 14 May 2008.

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/ecoliinquiry/hearings/?lang=en>

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/ecoliinquiry/hearings/transcripts/?lang=en>