

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE MICROBIOLOGICAL SAFETY OF FOOD
FSA FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY 2010-15**

In May 2010, the Food Standards Agency issued for public consultation its draft Foodborne Disease Strategy for 2010-15, which describes the Strategy's proposed approach, priorities and desired outcomes. The Committee was invited to comment on the draft strategy and this was provided to the FSA via the secretariat in July. The consultation closed for responses on 2 September 2010.

Ms Gael O'Neill will brief the Committee on the FSA's Foodborne Disease Strategy via the attached paper and a power point presentation (ACM/992a).

**Secretariat
September 2010**

FSA FOODBORNE DISEASE STRATEGY 2010-15

1. Foodborne disease is a major cause of illness in the UK population and imposes a significant burden on individuals and the economy. Each year, it is estimated that in the UK around a million people suffer a foodborne illness, which leads to around 20,000 people receiving hospital treatment and 500 deaths, at a total annual cost of nearly £1.5 billion (these data correct for 2008).
2. The FSA's Strategic Plan 2010-15 confirmed the reduction of foodborne disease to be a priority in ensuring that food produced and sold in the UK is safe to eat. The FSA's Food Chain Analysis project identified *Campylobacter*, which causes the largest number of cases each year, and *Listeria monocytogenes*, which is responsible for the largest number of deaths, as the key pathogens whose reduction would result in the greatest public health gains.
3. A renewed Foodborne Disease Strategy (FDS) to contribute to the delivery of a reduction in foodborne disease was published for consultation over summer 2010. The draft FDS describes the FSA's objectives, vision and approach to reduce UK foodborne illness until 2015. The consultation closed on 2nd September 2010 and we expect the finalised strategy will be published by the end of 2010.
4. Within the FDS we propose to take a targeted and UK-wide approach to reducing foodborne disease, concentrating on *Campylobacter* and *Listeria monocytogenes*, as priorities whose control could have the greatest impact on human foodborne illness in the UK. These priority organisms will be tackled through specific risk management programmes that will be supported by a refreshed Food Hygiene Campaign that aims to improve domestic food safety culture and achieve long-term behaviour change.
5. Although specific, focussed and targeted Risk Management Programmes for *Campylobacter* and *Listeria monocytogenes* will form the main strands of the Strategy, the FSA recognises the continuing importance of other UK foodborne pathogens, such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli* O157 and viruses. Other actions and activities aimed at furthering our understanding of disease caused by these pathogens or their control are outlined in the draft FDS.
6. It is also important to note that the FDS will work alongside a number of other areas of FSA work that aim to reduce foodborne illness. These include programmes devoted to risk-based meat inspection and controls, improving the effectiveness of enforcement, guidance on implementation and compliance with legislation and provision of transparent information about hygiene standards for consumers. The FDS will also maintain awareness of any changes in the incidence of other pathogens and will, if appropriate, reassess the need for further action as part of the FDS.