

Heads of Environmental Health Services and
Directors of Trading Standards Services

Cc CIEH
LACORS
TSI

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Dear Colleagues,

Salmonella Enteritidis Phage Type 14b infections in England and Wales

Background

You will be aware of the recent report published by the Health Protection Agency (HPA) regarding the increase in *Salmonella* Enteritidis Phage Type 14b and potential links with eggs supplied from an approved establishment in Spain.

The HPA and the Food Standards Agency are investigating a recent increase in the number of cases of a certain type of *Salmonella* in England and Wales. The increase in cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis phage type (PT) 14b, since mid-August 2009, was noted by the HPA as part of its monitoring of infectious diseases.

A total of 443 cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis (PT) 14b have been reported to the HPA this year, compared with 137 cases in 2008. Fourteen outbreaks in England and Wales are currently being investigated to determine if there is a common source of infection. A total of 144 cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis (PT) 14b have been associated with these 14 outbreaks to date.

The outbreaks have been linked to a number of different catering establishments and one care home. Although there is no conclusive evidence yet, the outbreaks may be linked to eggs sourced from outside the UK and used in these establishments. The Food Standards Agency has been in contact with the Spanish officials who have been investigating a possible link to eggs sourced from an approved establishment in Spain.

Current situation

We received information yesterday from Spain indicating that they have identified *Salmonella* from a particular flock on the production holding ES450470000034. We have



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

4th Floor, Aviation House, 125 Kingsway, London WC2B 6NH
Tel: 020 7276 9440 Fax: 020 7276 8446
E-mail: colin.houston@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk



been informed that all eggs laid by the affected flock in question intended for human consumption will be heat treated in accordance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1237/2007 which will ensure that the *Salmonella* is destroyed. The affected batches of eggs can be identified by the letter E on the end of the production holding number.

With regard to the eggs from the affected establishment that have already been sent to the UK, we are contacting the companies that are known to have received eggs (listed in Annex A) to ensure that they do not place these eggs on the market or that they arrange for them to go to an establishment authorised to prepare egg products, to be heat treated.

The Spanish authorities will be ensuring that no further eggs from the affected flock will be distributed to the UK until they are satisfied that there is no risk to the consumer. No other eggs from the approved establishment in Spain are thought to be affected.

In the meantime, the Agency is reminding caterers and other food businesses how to cook and prepare eggs safely. 'Eggs – advice to caterers' is available at the link below. Safer food, better business (SFBB) is designed to help catering businesses comply with food hygiene regulations that were introduced in January 2006, with adapted packs produced for childminders and restaurants and takeaways. A supplement to the SFBB catering pack is also available for use in care homes.

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/caterers/eggs/>

<http://www.food.gov.uk/foodindustry/regulation/hygleg/hyglegresources/sfbb/>

Action to take

If you become aware of any eggs in catering establishments during routine visits or when carrying out food poisoning investigations it is important to look for eggs with the following establishment number on the boxes or eggs (ES450470000034E) The letter 'E' on the end identifies the affected flock no other flocks from this establishment are implicated.

If you do find these eggs on the premises of catering establishments then please contact the food incident team on 0207 276 8448 to ensure that we can provide you with appropriate advice and guidance.

Yours

Colin Houston

Head of Incidents, Food Fraud and Emergency Planning

Implementation & Delivery Division