

Report on UK publicly funded research relating to risk assessment and the microbiological safety of food: January 2009

Area of research interest: [Foodborne pathogens](#)

The report was published in January 2009 and reviews UK publicly funded research on Risk Assessment, in relation to the microbiological safety of food. This report comprises research funded by the member organisations of the MSFFG, and covers a total of 59 projects over the period from 1992 to the end of 2007.

Microbiological risk assessment of food is the work to understand the risks to human health that may arise at any stage of the food chain. This includes how animals are managed on farms, food processing practices, how food is stored and how it is cooked. Such risk assessments are useful because they provide the scientific evidence base that is used to support the development of government advice on food safety (for example on safe cooking of meat), which in turn helps to protect public health. They may also be used to provide information that will help food producers develop good practices.

The funded research focuses on developing new methodologies, understanding different practices (farm and food handling) and on specific food-borne micro-organisms. Major areas of focus in the period of the report have included campylobacter, salmonella and *Escherichia coli* O157, the practice of spreading farmyard manure onto farm land, specific practices in the handling of poultry and some of the consequences of consumer practice and preferences in relation to food. There is also integration between UK and international research effort in this area, in particular with the EU where significant research to understand and disseminate best practice is supported.

The research projects recorded in this report help to provide an understanding of what are the best ways of carrying out relevant risk assessments, and give information on specific topics such as major food-borne pathogens (e.g. campylobacter, *E.coli* O157) of importance to public health.

The MSFFG is a cross-representational group involving bodies that fund microbiological research in the area of food safety. Further information on the membership and work of the MSFFG can be found on the Food Standards Agency (FSA) website and the MSFFG website - see links below.

Research report

England, Northern Ireland and Wales

PDF

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