

Salmonella Control Plans: Guidelines for the Veterinary Surgeon

Despite Industry's best efforts, the National average prevalence for England for Salmonella antibodies in pigs presented for slaughter as measured by the BPEX Zoonoses National Control Plan (ZNCP) remains stubbornly high at 48%. This represents no statistically significant change over the past 5 years. Although it is recognised that abattoir interventions can partially mitigate the situation, there remains a significant positive correlation between the prevalence of Salmonella in pigs arriving for slaughter and the prevalence of Salmonella in meat leaving the abattoir. European Baseline Surveys have indicated that the prevalence of Salmonella in British pigs is significantly higher than in many other Member States which compete in the UK market place. The Red Tractor Farm Assurance Scheme regards Salmonella contamination as the most significant food safety issue it has to address and is committed to ensuring positive action is taken.

Standard AH.5.3 states:

Producers must comply with the requirements of the ZNCP Salmonella scheme.

All farms are required to have and implement a Salmonella Control Plan. The impact of the Control Plan must be reviewed during Quarterly Veterinary Visits and the Control Plan updated as necessary. The implementation of the Control Plan will be verified as part of the Quarterly Veterinary Report and during the annual independent assessment. A copy of the current Control Plan must be sent to the Certification Body if requested. Full details of the sampling protocols and individual farm results are available on the BPEX website, www.bpex-zncp.org.uk

The purpose of this note is to clarify what constitutes a Salmonella Control Plan and what constitutes a review.

Elements of a Control Plan

- An appraisal of existing biosecurity arrangements on that farm. Use the BPEX Cleaning and Disinfection Self Assessment Checklist available at <http://www.bpex-zap.org.uk/zncp/about/library.aspx>
- For finishing herds, the latest ZNCP results at the time the plan was drafted and assess the trend of the farm's results over the previous 12 months
- A list of the significant risks that have been identified on this farm with respect to Salmonella Prevalence
- A list of any additional actions that are agreed to minimise the risk of Salmonella entering the farm
- A list of any additional actions that are agreed to minimise the risk of Salmonella circulating within the farm
- Timescales for the introduction of these additional actions which have been agreed with the producer
- Results of any microbiological tests which may have been undertaken for this farm and a review of how these (including any serotyping) have informed the control strategy
- Your signature and the date

Note: A Salmonella Control Plan may be part of the Veterinary Health Plan for the farm, provided the above issues are all covered. There is no specific requirement for a separate document.

Elements of a Quarterly Review

- A note of the latest ZNCP results and an assessment of the trend of the rolling 12 month results for the farm
- A review of the agreed actions, noting whether they are complete, on-going, or not yet addressed
- A revised agreed date to address any actions which were identified as not yet addressed
- A list of any additional actions agreed to be necessary
- A note of any agreement to cease actions
- Your signature and the date