

EFTA Surveillance Authority's fact-finding missions on mitigation measures in place for *Campylobacter* in poultry

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Fact-finding missions were carried out in Iceland and Norway by the EFTA Surveillance Authority (the Authority) in 2016 as part of a series of missions to the European Economic Area (EEA) States in cooperation with the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) of the European Commission.

The objective of these fact-finding missions was to gather information and gain a broad overview of mitigation measures in place for *Campylobacter* in poultry in the EEA. The series also aimed at identifying and disseminating to stakeholders good practices concerning the reduction of *Campylobacter* in poultry.

Mitigation of *Campylobacter* in poultry meat has been a priority over recent years in the EFTA states visited. The main measures implemented consist in the freezing or heat-treatment of meat from all *Campylobacter*-positive broiler flocks, either on the basis of legislation or of a voluntary plan. Specific national control programmes, involving sampling schemes at farms and slaughterhouses, are implemented in collaboration with the industry, and measures in place mainly target poultry primary production. Competent authorities and the industry consider the national control programmes as the driving force to control colonisation of broiler flocks with *Campylobacter*.

Awareness and commitment of food business operators and competent authorities, enhanced biosecurity measures in broiler farms, together with good practices in farming systems such as efficient cleaning and disinfection, control of movement of people and equipment, limited partial depopulation, and education of farmers and their staff, contribute to a low *Campylobacter* prevalence in poultry flocks. As a result, stakeholders and competent authorities consider cross-contamination during the slaughtering process a minor risk, provided hygiene requirements are respected.

Based on current trends, competent authorities of the EFTA states visited consider their national action plan and control programme effective in reducing *Campylobacter* prevalence in poultry products.

The information gathered during these missions is summarised in an overview report published by DG SANTE in close collaboration with the Authority, which describes the measures implemented in the countries visited in order to tackle *Campylobacter* and the main conclusions noted.