

Dear

INVITATION TO ATTEND AN INDUSTRY SUMMIT ON CAMPYLOBACTER

Monday 2 September 2013, FSA Head Office, London

I am writing to invite you to attend a CEO round table discussion on what can be done, by whom, to reduce the public health impact of food poisoning caused by campylobacter, and specifically what more retailers, processors and producers can do to safeguard consumers.

As I am sure you are aware, reducing foodborne disease caused by campylobacter is the FSA's top food safety priority. The largest source of campylobacteriosis is raw poultry meat. Since 2009 we have been working in collaboration with industry (producers, processors and retailers) as well as colleagues in other government departments, through a Joint Working Group on Campylobacter, to identify, trial and implement interventions to significantly reduce the levels of contamination on raw poultry.

In 2010 this Joint Working Group agreed and published a joint target to reduce the proportion of most heavily contaminated birds from 27% to 10% by 2015. Data over the past year from FSA monitoring of contamination at the end of processing indicates that there has been no significant change in contamination levels since 2008. This lack of progress is very disappointing and we are now reviewing our strategic approach to reducing Campylobacter to refocus and re-energise efforts in this area, where your company has a key role to play.

The collaborative approach which the Joint Working Group has operated to date has been effective in bringing together the key players around a common objective and it is helpful that Campylobacter now features on the agendas of senior managers in your company. Indeed, I have recently had some very useful and positive discussions with some individuals and have been encouraged by their personal commitment to address what is the biggest public health risk associated with food on the market today.

However, it is clear that more needs to be done to tackle campylobacter, which not only presents a significant risk to the public but also to businesses.

While I am keen that the FSA facilitates the vigorous pursuit and development of solutions to this problem, I am also clear that responsibility for tackling and

controlling this pathogen lies with the industry that produces and profits from the sale of products that are heavily contaminated with it.

With this in mind, I would like to invite you to join me and other senior industry and retail executives for a round table meeting to discuss the current unacceptable situation and agree concrete actions the industry needs to take to accelerate finding a solution to this problem. I believe the key drivers in tackling campylobacter relate to strategy, business reputation, brand equity and cost, rather than technical matters, hence I am directing this invitation to you, rather than the members of your organisation with whom we already engage through our relevant working groups.

The meeting will be held on Monday 2nd September at 10am at the FSA Head Office in London. This is just a week before the FSA Open Board meeting where this issue will be considered. I have appended a list of other invitees, for your information.

Please let my private secretary [FOI s40(2)&(3)] know whether you (or another executive) will be able to attend on behalf of your company **by Friday 9th August** [FOI s40(2)&(3)]@foodstandards.gsi.gov.uk, 020 7276 [FOI s40(2)&(3)]).

I would be grateful if you would consider in advance what changes your company could consider making to help deliver lower levels of contamination, so that a real improvement can be achieved as well as what we could do as the regulator to drive and support improvement.

I look forward to hearing your proposals, and am very happy to talk one to one on the phone in advance of the meeting if that would be useful. I have no doubt that between us we can save lives if we adopt a different, more impactful approach to tackling campylobacter and I look forward very much to working with you to achieve that aim.

Yours sincerely

Catherine Brown

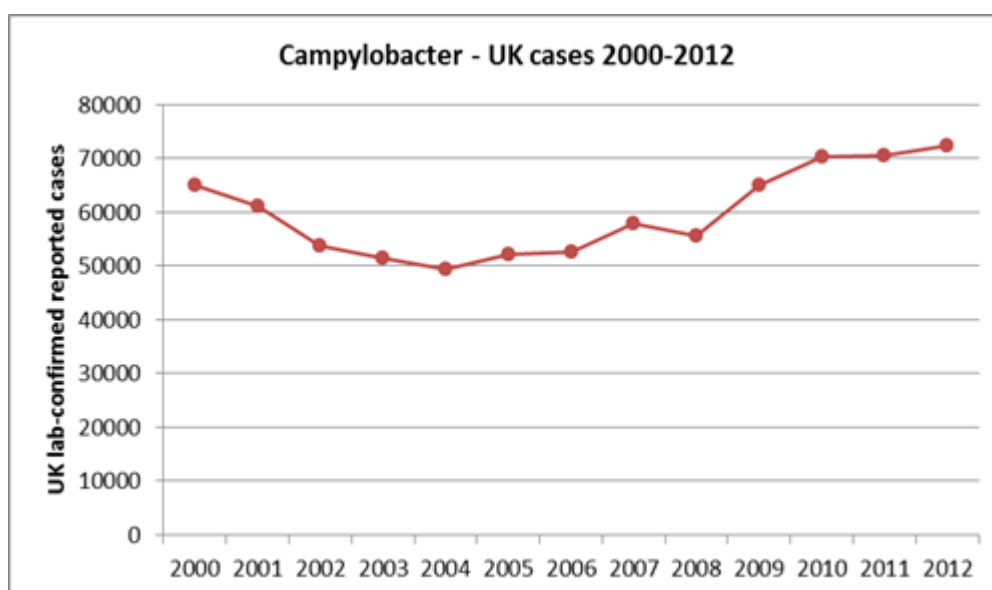
Overview of Campylobacter contamination and cases of campylobacteriosis

In 2010, the government/industry Joint Working Group on Campylobacter Reduction (JWG) agreed and published an evidence-based target for the reduction of Campylobacter contamination of UK-produced chickens to reduce the percentage of the most heavily contaminated chickens at the end of the slaughter process from 27% in 2008 to 19% by 2013, and to 10% by 2015.

The following table shows the results from FSA monitoring of contamination at the end of processing against the baseline (2008 figures) and the 2015 target agreed by the Joint Working Group.

	<100 cfu/g	100-1,000 cfu/g	>1,000 cfu/g
Baseline - 2008	42%	31%	27%
Data Mar 12 – Feb 13	35%	35%	30%
Change from baseline	- 7%	+ 4%	+3%
Target 2015	Improvement (higher than 2008)	Improvement (higher than 2008)	10%

The graph below shows that rates of campylobacteriosis in the human population have been increasing since 2005, although the rate of increase has slowed since 2010. In 2012 there were 72,562 laboratory-confirmed UK cases which, due to underreporting, are estimated to represent a total of around 460,000 actual cases in the community.



List of invitees to Campylobacter industry roundtable – 2 September 2013

FSA

Catherine Brown	Chief Executive
Steve Wearne	Director of Food Safety
Stephen Humphreys	Director of Communications
Liz Redmond	Veterinary Director
Javier Dominguez	Head of Strategy, Hygiene and Microbiology

Industry

2Sisters	Ranjit Singh, Chief Executive
Bernard Matthews	David Joll, Executive Chair
Cargill	tbc
Faccenda	Andy Dawkins, Managing Director
Moy Park	Nigel Dunlop, Managing Director/CEO
M&S	Steve Rowe, Executive Director, Food
Co-op	Steve Murrells, Chief Executive, Food
Morrisons	Dalton Phillips, Chief Executive
Waitrose	Mark Price, Managing Director
Asda	Andy Clarke, President and CEO
Sainsbury's	Justin King, Chief Executive
Tesco	Philip Clarke Chief Executive