

The Salmonella monitoring programme in The Netherlands

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Abstract

The Salmonella monitoring programme in The Netherlands started in 2005. The programme consists of Salmonella monitoring as well on the pre harvested as the post harvested stage.

The monitoring programme is an obligatory PVV-programme, which includes both the herd level of fattening pigs (pre harvest) and the slaughterhouse level (postharvest). Herd level monitoring is based on testing blood samples for the presence of antibodies against Salmonella. Per period of 4 months, 12 blood samples have to be collected. The blood samples can be taken on the farm or in the slaughterhouse. The samples are tested in the Idexx ELISA or comparable serological tests, with a cut off of 40% OD. The tests are carried out by approved laboratories.

When a total of 36 blood samples per farm is reached, this farm is classified into one of the three Salmonella categories. Besides serological monitoring, bacteriological monitoring is performed on carcasses. Slaughterhouses have to sample 5 carcasses per day and are analysed in approved laboratories as one pooled sample. Slaughterhouses can choose between sampling with the destructive method (cork bore) or the sponge method.

Pre harvest data show that 75% of the herds in the Netherlands are in category 1, 20% in category 2 and 5 % in category 3. At this moment, farms in category 3 are advised tot take measures against Salmonella.

The average Salmonella contamination of the carcasses in the slaughterhouses was less than 2,0% (sponge method).

In the EU-baseline study fattening pigs, the prevalence in the Netherlands of the lymph nodes was 8% while the average 11%. In the EU-baseline study breeding pigs, the prevalence in the Netherlands was 55% while the average was 29%. The prevalence of the carcasses is less than 2,0%. These figures show that there is no linear distribution between the prevalence of the breeding pigs, the fattening pigs and the carcasses. The aim of elimination of Salmonella is to reduce the cases of human Salmonellosis.

We suggest to fix one Salmonella target on carcass level for all the EU memberstates. The different EU memberstates can chose their own control strategies based on the country specific Salmonella prevalence as well as the country specific herd and slaughterhouse structures.