# Biosecurity guidelines to reduce the risk of Salmonella to your poultry and other animals

Salmonellosis affects a wide range of animals including mammals, birds and reptiles. Salmonellosis is a zoonosis i.e. the infection can be transferred between animals and humans and vice versa via various pathways such as food, water and waste.

Wild animals including vermin can be a means of spreading salmonella, and various salmonella species are common in the environment. Often animals and humans can carry and spread salmonella bacteria without being clinically affected. Maintaining good hygiene practices is central to reducing the zoonotic risk.

Clinical disease due to salmonella infection in animals can be very severe, usually involves some degree of gastroenteritis and can be fatal in animals especially if they are otherwise stressed. Prompt treatment is very important to reduce the severity of the disease and the risk of spread to other animals and people. This includes promptly seeking veterinary advice and isolating the affected animals from other animals and people.

Backyard hens

All detections of salmonella in animals in Tasmania are reported to Biosecurity Tasmania for follow-up as necessary. Specific short term restrictions are placed on the movement of animals from affected groups when necessary to treat the risk of spread.

Salmonellosis acquired from eggs in Australia is usually due to contaminated and damaged eggshells (https://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/home).

Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) is a variety of salmonella rarely detected in Australia and even rarer in commercial layer hens. SE infection in poultry is unusual in that it can infect hens and be transferred into the egg during its development. SE has caused significant disruption to egg industries overseas and very recently in parts of Australia.

Rigorous management measures are employed on farms to minimise the risk of SE incursion and to control SE when it is detected.

SE has not been detected in commercial layer fowls in Tasmania to date although it has been found in a commercial farm environment in 2000. SE is very rarely detected in other animals including sick calves in 1995 and Tasmanian devils in 2016. SE is therefore a biosecurity risk requiring vigilance.

Food safety programs routinely address the risk of acquiring salmonellosis from eggs and facilitate trace back for any egg-related food safety issue. [Link to Egg Food Safety Scheme: https://dpipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/product-integrity/food-safety/eggs/egg-food-safety-scheme]

If you have animals including layer fowls the following precautions will assist to minimise the risk of salmonellosis.

1. Always maintain good hygiene practices such as washing your hands after handling animals, their equipment or eggs.
2. Keep your animals clean, well fed and healthy – for layers this aids good shell quality and cleanliness. Provide good quality feed and clean, bore or chlorinated water.
3. Never feed eggs subject to a market recall to ANY animal.
4. Never feed raw eggs including shells to your poultry. Poultry may eat eggs from time to time and it is a common complaint of the backyard poultry keeper. However, never deliberately feed eggs to your poultry.
5. Minimise wild bird and vermin contact with your poultry and other animals. Keep the poultry run clean and tidy and limit access to poultry food. Keep poultry feed in vermin-proof containers.
6. Promptly seek advice from your veterinarian if your poultry or other animals are unwell and if in doubt contact AnimalDisease.Enquiries@dpipwe.tas.gov.au or telephone 03 6165 3777.