PATH-SAFE Newsletter March 2025

PATH-SAFE is a Shared Outcomes Fund (SOF) research programme which aims to pilot a national surveillance programme for foodborne pathogens and antimicrobial resistance.

Hello!

Welcome to the?Pathogen Surveillance in Agriculture, Food and the Environment (PATH-SAFE) programme newsletter for March 2025!?

PATH-SAFE is a?4-year, UK wide, cross government programme, led by the FSA and supported by £24m funding from the HMT Shared Outcomes Fund (SOF) and match funding from a range of government and academic delivery partners.? The programme is working to develop a pilot national surveillance network, using the latest DNA-sequencing technology and environmental sampling, to improve the detection, and tracking of foodborne human pathogens and antimicrobial resistance (AMR) through the whole agri-food system from farm-to-fork. ?

As the programme draws to a close at the end of March 2025, we are keen to use this final newsletter to reflect on the successes of the programme and look to the future.
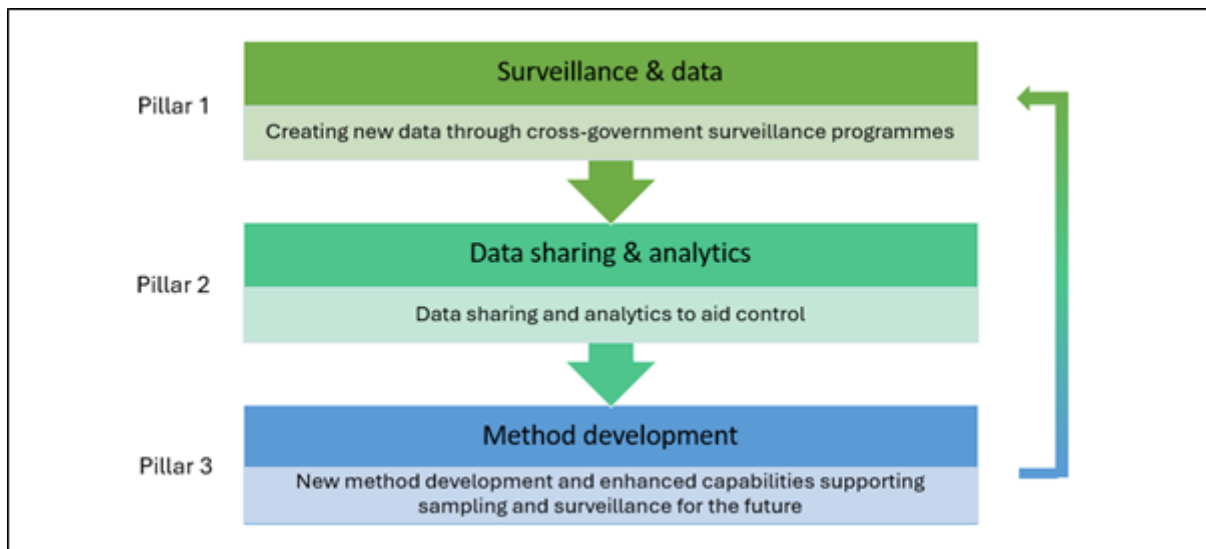
This newsletter at a glance:

- key achievements
- forward look

Key achievements

Our long-term ambition is to build an integrated national food surveillance system and the pilots developed in PATH-SAFE have firmly put us on a pathway to success.
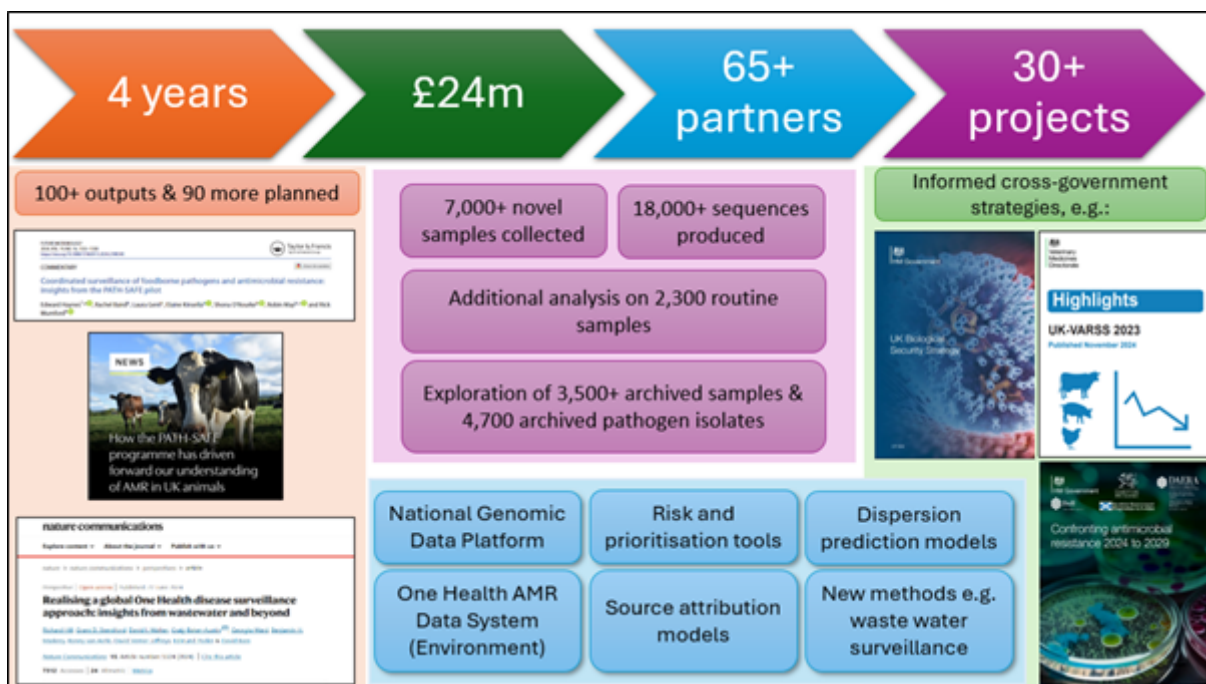
Through over 30 different projects, spanning four thematic areas (Data Sharing and Analysis, Foodborne Disease, Antimicrobial Resistance and On-Site Diagnostics), the programme has broken new ground scientifically and has challenged the status quo. We have generated new knowledge (pillar 1), brought data together (pillar 2) and developed new methodologies, approaches and tools (pillar 3).

These pillars are interconnected and create feedback loops to inform need within the system.

The programme has produced numerous outputs and informed a variety of cross-government strategies.

Some key examples include:

We have also fostered a strong collaboration and community within PATH-SAFE which has allowed us to bring people together in project delivery, communities of interest, webinar series and events, developing lasting relationships and strong foundations for ongoing collaboration. Below is a snapshot of our partnership, webinar series and some pictures from our events.

Innovation in Biosurveillance: Recent progress and new opportunities

Leonardo Royal Hotel, Birmingham

14th November 2023

PATH-SAFE Biosurveillance Conference

Holiday Inn London - Bloomsbury

and 29th February 2024

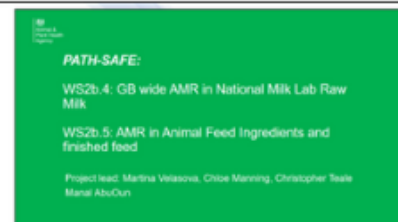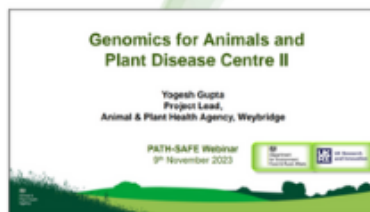So impressive to see what the programme has brokered between all

Review of the FSA's Antimicrobial Resistance Research & Evidence Programme

Holiday Inn Bloomsbury, London

21st – 22nd March 2023

MICROBIOLOGY SOCIETY

ONE HEALTH AMR SURVEILLANCE ROUNDTABLE
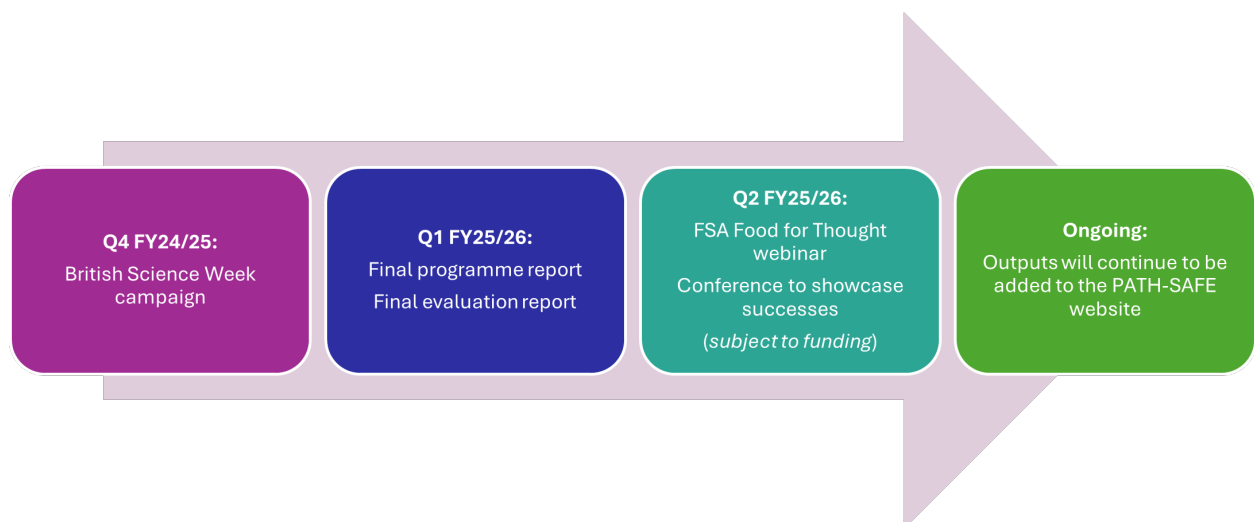
2 December

PATH-SAFE webinar series

Forward look

Projects

Over 50% of PATH-SAFE project outputs are ready to be deployed and will now be embedded into the surveillance infrastructure of partner organisations in order to improve the detection and management of foodborne pathogenic threats across the four nations. Where outputs are not yet ready for deployment or where research conducted has unearthed new questions , programme partners are exploring opportunities to take the research work forward via separate funding in the future.

So far, we have identified several opportunities to continue work on the National Genomic Data Platform, Onsite Diagnostics and Surveillance (e.g. STEC programme, baseline data projects, AMR R&D, catchment R&D, source attribution models and bioinformatic analyses). These opportunities are tentative and will become clearer as we move closer to the next financial year.

Communications and events

We have a number of key publications and events coming up as we close the programme. These include:

Q4 FY24/25:
British Science Week campaign

Q1 FY25/26:
Final programme report
Final evaluation report

Q2 FY25/26:
FSA Food for Thought webinar
Conference to showcase successes
(*subject to funding*)

Ongoing:
Outputs will continue to be added to the PATH-SAFE website

Check out our British Science Week 2025 blog, PATH-SAFE: Changing the way we approach surveillance.

Final programme/evaluation reports and project outputs will be published on the PATH-SAFE website as they become available, and details of webinars/events will be shared with our distribution list and on the website in due course. Our quarterly newsletter will end when the programme closes. However, the FSA Science, Evidence and Research newsletter will continue and will feature any FSA updates from work that is building on PATH-SAFE outputs.

Evaluation

The formal evaluation of PATH-SAFE is due to complete at the end of March. Progress has been focused on data collection and synthesis, including a survey, documentation review, interviews and case studies. These findings are being written up into a final evaluation report, which will be finalised at the end of March. The report will be published, expected in late spring/summer.

Message from the PATH-SAFE Programme Senior Responsible Officers, Prof. Rick Mumford and Prof. Robin May:

> PATH-SAFE has been a shining example of how great collaboration can deliver real progress. I am extremely proud of the team's achievements in bringing together great expertise, advanced technology and diverse datasets in order to push the boundaries of pathogen detection in the UK. I am delighted to see PATH-SAFE findings becoming integrated into routine surveillance and look forward to seeing the significant public health benefits that this will drive.
> Professor Robin May
>
> As SRO for PATH-SAFE, I am very proud of what the programme has achieved over the last four years. Not only has the consortium delivered so much in terms of advancing foodborne disease and AMR surveillance, but it has also worked together as great partnership, across departments, nations and disciplines, to improve the UK's biosecurity capabilities. I just want to say a huge thank you to the team and all those involved for making it such a great project to be part of.
> Professor Rick Mumford

For further information

For any questions or feedback please contact the team at?pathsafe@food.gov.uk.?

[Sign up to the SERD newsletter](#) which contains PATH-SAFE news and link to our full newsletter.

To keep up to date on PATH-SAFE please visit?[Pathogen Surveillance in Agriculture, Food and the Environment (PATH-SAFE) programme](#).