

Food Standards Agency backs campaign to ‘Spread Awareness, Stop Resistance’

An antimicrobial is any substance that kills or inhibits the growth of microorganisms, such as antibiotic drugs which are used to treat bacterial infections in both humans and animals.

When bacteria change and find ways to survive the effects of antimicrobials, this is known as ‘antimicrobial resistance’ (AMR), and the greater the use of antimicrobials and antibiotics then the more likely it is that bacteria will become resistant.

This is a huge concern as it can lead to infections being more difficult to treat with drugs and poses a risk to public health.

This year’s WAAW theme is ‘Spread Awareness, Stop Resistance’, and aims to encourage stakeholders and members of the public to be Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Awareness champions.

Meanwhile, tackling AMR is a national strategic priority for the UK Government which has led to the development of a new 20-year Vision for AMR and the 5-year National Action Plan (NAP), which runs until 2024.

The NAP includes a specific section on the importance of better food safety to limit the contamination of foods and spread of AMR, with an emphasis on strengthening the evidence base for AMR and food safety through research, surveillance and promoting good practice across the food chain.

During WAAW, the FSA has published reports on the [burden of AMR genes in selected ready-to-eat foods](#), and [the latest survey of AMR in E.coli from retail meats in the UK](#).

Meanwhile, [an FSA blog tells the story of a new cross-government programme to track foodborne pathogens and antimicrobial resistant \(AMR\) microbes](#) in all four nations of the UK.