

Assessment of the risk to consumers as a result of disruption to the cold chain during direct supply of Qurbani meat and offal

Area of research interest: [Foodborne pathogens](#)

Project status: Completed

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Qurbani is a religious practice that takes place during Eid al-Adha. Consumers practicing Qurbani typically wish to collect meat and red offal within a short time after slaughter, which means these products cannot complete normal chilling processes before leaving the slaughterhouse. This could permit greater growth of pathogens and has the potential to increase the risk of consumer illness. The FSA is working with industry and stakeholder groups to ensure that the risk to consumers under these conditions remains at an acceptable level. To help inform these discussions, the FSA commissioned this assessment to understand the difference in risk from allowing meat and offal to be provided to consumers without the normal chilling process.

The microbiological team at the FSA have analysed scientific literature, expert opinion and business and consumer survey data to assess the effect of disrupting the cold chain on pathogens in Qurbani meat. The pathogens that were chosen for inclusion in this assessment are non-typhoidal *Salmonella enterica*, Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*, and *Clostridium perfringens*. Their growth characteristics and prevalence in beef, lamb and goat meat and offal are discussed.

The assessment concluded that given the reported variation in the process, there were two important scenarios with distinct outcomes. In the typical scenario, which is the most likely outcome based on the collected data, there is no significant difference in risk to consumer health compared to normal chilling processes, and the risk level was established as Very Low (“very rare but cannot be excluded”). In a reasonably foreseeable worst-case scenario, *Salmonella* spp. and STEC levels may increase, presenting an increased risk to the consumer. This risk level was established as Low (“rare but does occur”). We also identified several areas where more evidence would be helpful, and as a result identified a High level of uncertainty in our conclusion.

Read the risk assessment

[Assessment of the risk to consumers as a result of disruption to the cold chain during direct supply of Qurbani meat and offal](#) (accessible format)

England and Wales

PDF

[View Assessment of the risk to consumers as a result of disruption to the cold chain during direct supply of Qurbani meat and offal as PDF\(Open in a new window\)](#) (666.37 KB)

Annexes

England and Wales

EXCEL

[View Consumer, veterinarian and food business operator responses to the 2021 survey for the supply of meat and offal during the Qurbani period.xlsx as Excel\(Open in a new window\)](#) (57.27 KB)