

## **BURGERS SERVED RARE IN CATERING OUTLETS – UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF SEPTEMBER 2015 BOARD DECISION**

A formal project team is co-ordinating implementation of the Board's decision in September 2015. The project has the following objectives:

- To amplify our advice to consumers against consumption of burgers less than thoroughly cooked at home, to track penetration of the advice and claimed consumer behaviour, and keep our advice and its dissemination under review in the light of the tracker.
- To ensure that consumers are made aware of the potential risks associated with burgers served rare in catering outlets and can make informed decisions when deciding on whether to consume or allow others to consume these products.
- To ensure that those businesses that produce meat or minced meat preparations, which supply premises that serve burgers which are less than thoroughly cooked, are aware of, and apply, the requirements to have appropriate procedures in place to reduce risk (referred to as “source control” in the Board discussion).
- To ensure that those businesses intending to serve burgers less than thoroughly cooked are aware of, and apply, the requirements to have appropriate procedures in place to reduce risk (including the specific identification of *Salmonella* and STEC, among other pathogens, as particular hazards with evidence that controls for these organisms have been validated; sampling and testing regimes to verify controls; specific corrective action in the event of adverse results; an appropriate consumer advisory statement at the point of ordering food; and only serving burgers that are well-done to children).
- To ensure that local authority regulators have the necessary information to enable them to make a decision on whether enforcement action is necessary when applied to the production or preparation in catering outlets of burgers intended to be consumed less than thoroughly cooked, with such enforcement action being at a level of the enforcement hierarchy that is appropriate to the significance and severity of the hazard associated with STEC.
- With development of work to explore the effectiveness of combinations of source reduction and pathway options in delivering products for consumption equivalent in terms of microbiological safety to those achieved by subjecting burgers made from standard sourced mince to a 6-log reduction by thorough cooking, and expert assessment of any additional or innovative interventions that may be used in either source control or pathway management
- To monitor impacts of the application of these controls, and set levels for each of these impact measures that would trigger referral of the issue back to the Board.

Over the next six months, the project will deliver:

- An FSA web based resource to consolidate existing guidance, aimed at caterers, producers and local authorities - by March 2016

- The further development and testing of consumer messaging for catering establishments, in conjunction with the industry - by April 2016
- Development of statistical modelling to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions both individually and collectively throughout the food chain - by July 2016
- A consumer campaign to ensure that the advice to consumers against consumption of burgers less than thoroughly cooked in the home is restated, reinforced and understood - by July 2016
- Establishment of measurable triggers for foodborne pathogens enable the Board to reconsider its position if necessary, supported by ongoing enhanced surveillance of STEC and other relevant pathogens – implemented by July 2016
- Keep the ACMSF updated on developments in this area and where necessary seek their input on key technical issues such as the time/temperatures for a 4 log reduction in STEC and modelling the impact of interventions in the food chain – by July 2016.

There will be a further update to the Board at its July 2016 meeting and we plan to issue further comprehensive guidance to the industry and local authority regulators in autumn 2016.