

Communication 59/2023

17 November 2023

ZooNotify: New data portal makes the occurrence of zoonosis pathogens and their resistances visible

How common is *Salmonella* in poultry flocks? Which antibiotic resistances are found in staphylococci in pigsties and which subtypes of *Escherichia coli* bacteria can be detected in dairy cattle and the food produced from milk? The ZooNotify project provides data to help answer these and many other questions relating to zoonoses. The project, initiated and supervised by the German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR), makes data on microorganisms and their distribution available to experts and the interested public via a website. In this way, it helps to make development trends transparent and provides an important basis for combating zoonosis diseases in humans and animals.

The data is visualised in the form of graphs and can be downloaded and used by researchers for presentations, for example. It is also possible to view the data on which the graphs are based and evaluate it for your own questions, for example. ZooNotify will be officially launched on 17 November 2023 at a symposium on zoonoses and food safety in Berlin-Marienfelde.

Zoonosis pathogens are bacteria that are transmitted from animals to humans through direct contact or food and can cause illness in humans. The best-known pathogens include *Salmonella*, which often circulates in pig and poultry houses and can cause severe diarrhoea in humans. Other examples are *Listeria*, *Campylobacter* or MRSA (methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*).

The BfR conducts research into the pathogens themselves as well as their spread (epidemiology), transmission routes and the development of diagnostic methods suitable for everyday use, particularly in the reference laboratories. These laboratories are also tasked with analysing samples that are regularly taken along the food chain for nationwide zoonosis monitoring, i.e. from animal stables to slaughterhouses and food manufacturers to food retailers and thus to consumers.

Researchers at the BfR characterise the pathogens found by the regional state laboratories and examine them for antibiotic resistance. The results are included in the annual federal and state reports on zoonosis monitoring and subsequently in the EU zoonosis reports published by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). By making this data available on the new internet portal, it can now be viewed and used by interested parties at a low threshold for the first time. In addition to the data from the above-mentioned zoonosis monitoring, data from the *Salmonella* control programmes in poultry is also included in the portal. In these programmes, it is also a task of the BfR to characterise detected pathogens in general and with regard to their resistance.

The portal is continuously updated and is to be expanded in future to include further application options. In the medium term, for example, data generated at the BfR itself in connection with zoonotic pathogens will also be made available as part of an open data strategy.

The data portal can be accessed at the following address: <https://zoonotify.bfr.berlin>

The programme of the BfR symposium on zoonoses and food safety can be found here: <https://www.bfr-akademie.de/deutsch/veranstaltungen/szl2023.html>

Further information on Zoonoses

Germs in food - food-borne infections and how to prevent them

https://www.bfr.bund.de/en/press_information/2023/23/germs_in_food_food_borne_infections_and_how_to_prevent_them-313356.html

About the BfR

The German Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) is a scientifically independent institution within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) in Germany. The BfR advises the Federal Government and the States ('Laender') on questions of food, chemicals and product safety. The BfR conducts independent research on topics that are closely linked to its assessment tasks.

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