

# E. coli Control of Cross-Contamination Guidance

## Implementation Plan of the Commercial Health Team for Jersey

### **Introduction**

The guidance has been issued by the Food Standards Agency of England for use by regulatory agencies in the UK. The sources of E.coli are raw meat and vegetable products contaminated with soil. As most of the meat and a high proportion of vegetables consumed in Jersey are imported from or through the UK the risks to health in Jersey will be similar to those in the UK. It is therefore appropriate to introduce similar controls in Jersey.

The guidance has been introduced as a response to public enquiries following outbreaks of E. coli infection and uses research carried out in the UK. The scale of the work done to research the guidance would be impossible to replicate in Jersey and it is therefore appropriate to adopt the guidance in full for use in Jersey.

The law in Jersey does not include some EC law requirements and it has to be recognised that enforcement of all of the guidance in Jersey will not be possible.

### **Implementation**

#### **Priority**

Visits to all retail and wholesale Butchers that handle raw products and cooked meats to introduce them to the guidance and supporting information.

An immediate Mandatory requirement for any using complex machinery (vacuum packing and meat slicing machines in particular) to only use them for either raw or ready to eat product.

The same mandatory requirement to apply to any other premises with dual use machines encountered in inspections or visits.

#### **Routine**

High risk and overdue premises measured by the risk rating system will be the priorities for action.

Officers undertaking food safety inspections will give priority to the assessment of the risks of contamination from raw products to ready to eat products either by direct or indirect contact.

In all premises handling both categories of product there will be a mandatory requirement to provide "clean" areas in which no raw products will enter. If in

the officers opinion separation is not possible due to the size of the premises they will seek to arrive at other means of physical separation or other suitable means of reducing the risk.

Disinfection alone will not be accepted as a control for the risk without approval from the lead food officer who will record the reasons for acceptance in the premises file.

Less complex machinery and other contact points may have dual use but there must be procedures in place to prevent cross contamination of products from personal contact, overclothing, sitting, wrapping material etc. Where appropriate businesses should be encouraged to provide separate equipment.

Relevant branded disinfectants should be accepted but businesses required to demonstrate that they meet the guidance standard.

Other elements of the guidance will be dealt with in line with departmental procedures eg hand washing, training, HACCP etc.

## **Information for Businesses**

The leaflet for businesses will be distributed following inspection.

A link to the guidance will be placed on the web site.

There will be a release of press information on the adoption of the guidance.