

Synergies in Microbiological Food Safety and Animal Health Risk Assessment

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Microbiological risk assessments are generally undertaken according to 'Codex' guidelines as adopted by the World Health Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (WHO/FAO). Animal health risk assessments, including in particular animal import risk assessments, are generally undertaken using the guidelines of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). Although these systems have some differences in terminology and detail, in fact they abide by the same underlying principles. Thus any risk assessor familiar with one type should have no great difficulty in undertaking a risk assessment of the other type.

Taking as an example Pathogen P, a zoonotic pathogen present in livestock Species S in Country Ci, but not present in Country Cf, the two sets of guidelines will be examined. Two complementary risk assessments will be considered; firstly, the risk of food-borne infection with Pathogen P from Species S in the human population in Country Ci; and secondly, the risk of infection of Species S in country Cf due to importation of Species S from Country Ci. Synergies in method, data required, and outcomes will be examined, with respect both to the two sets of guidelines, and the underlying risk assessment principles.