

## Available reports

- *A Survey of Phenotypic and Genetic Methods Used to Identify and Differentiate Thermotolerant Campylobacter Species and Strains, June 2001*
- *Isolation of Thermotolerant Campylobacter – Review and methods for New Zealand laboratories, September 2002*
- *Subtyping of Zoonotic Pathogens – The role of method standardisation, and electronic databases in the reduction of the infectious disease burden in New Zealand, August 2002.*

## Further information

If you would like to know more about the programme, its related research projects and their outcomes, current activities, or get copies of the reports, please contact Dr Alexander Kouzminov. His contact details are:

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Reports are also available on the Ministry of Health website [www.moh.govt.nz/water](http://www.moh.govt.nz/water)

# Enteric Zoonotic Disease Research in New Zealand

**Zoonoses are diseases, some severe, caused by micro-organisms that are transmitted from animals and birds to humans. In New Zealand, and other developed countries, enteric zoonotic diseases are major contributors to water- and food-borne disease, including gastroenteritis. We have a shared interest in developing strategies for their control.**

**In New Zealand the most significant micro-organisms causing zoonotic diseases are the bacteria *Campylobacter* spp., some strains of *Escherichia coli*, *Salmonella* spp., and the protozoa *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*.**

## **Research co-ordination in New Zealand**

Co-ordination of research on enteric zoonoses is challenging because it cuts across responsibilities of several government agencies. Research from a variety of scientific disciplines also needs to be integrated.

In May 2000 a joint interagency programme was developed as a result of a Ministry of Health initiative. The programme, 'Enhanced co-ordination and development of enteric disease research in New Zealand' has been implemented. It involves people from primary industries, researchers, research funding agencies, and policy advisors and regulators of food/water quality from central and local government. The programme focused initially on *Campylobacter* spp. but also covers co-ordination of research on other disease-causing organisms, including *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, *Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*.

The programme's mission is *to reduce the burden of enteric zoonoses in New Zealand*.

The quality and relevance of enteric disease research is being enhanced through collaboration between researchers in Crown Research Institutes and universities, and improved co-ordination of research funders who include central and local government, the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology, and primary industries.

Contact has been established internationally with research groups in USA, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and Iceland.

This national and international co-ordination has been facilitated by the Enteric Zoonotic Disease Research Steering Committee and its two expert technical sub-committees: the Methodology Group and the Risk Management Group.

Research commissioned and co-ordinated by the Steering Committee has led to:

- better understanding of the ecology and transmission of *Campylobacter* in various reservoirs
- improved knowledge of amplification factors in these reservoirs, transmission pathways between reservoirs, and possible means of control of the disease in New Zealand
- development of quantitative risk assessment models for *Campylobacter* in New Zealand
- assessment of the effectiveness of interventions and remedial actions and how they may be improved to prevent water- and food-borne disease
- development of guidelines for more effective interventions to prevent water- and food-borne disease, including possible measures for implementation by local government.