

FoodWise

BABERGH'S FOOD SAFETY AND HYGIENE NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2

Firth's Focus



*Malcolm Firth
Head of
Environmental
Services*

Welcome to the second issue of FoodWise – Babergh District Council's newsletter for local food businesses.

To start, I would like to thank everyone who took the trouble to

give us feedback on the first issue. It was very helpful to us and suggests that the information we have provided is of real use to you.

Secondly, in this issue, we focus upon the little known but wide-spread problem of Campylobacter infection. We detail how this bacterium can be spread and give hints as to how you can ensure that it doesn't cause a problem in your food business.

We also show how Babergh and food businesses can work more

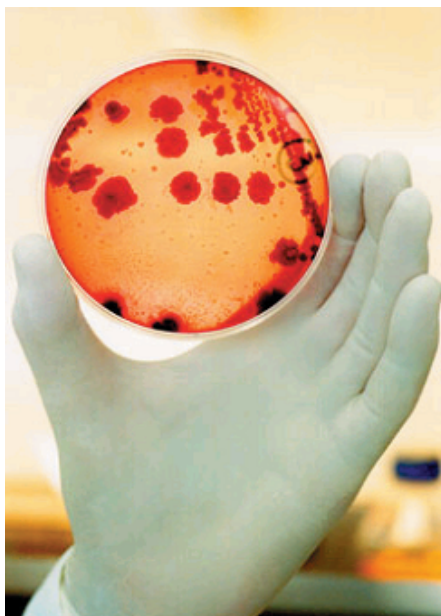
efficiently together when an outbreak of food poisoning occurs. Whilst an outbreak is obviously stressful for all concerned, there many things you can do to help the investigation and minimise the impact on your business.

Finally, we provide a quick test for you to see if your basic food hygiene knowledge is still up to scratch or whether it might be time to book onto a refresher course!

Malcolm Firth

Campylobacter

Which type of bacteria do you think causes the most cases of food poisoning each year in the UK? Salmonella? It used to be but not any more. E.coli O157?



No, it causes serious illness but nowhere near as many cases as the number one bug. Give up? It's **Campylobacter**.

If you have never even heard of this bacterium, you're not alone. Thanks to Edwina Currie everyone knows about Salmonella, and the Lanarkshire outbreak in 1996 which resulted in 21 deaths certainly brought E. coli into the limelight. So if Campylobacter is so

common, why isn't it better known? Probably the most important reason why Campylobacter is less well known than other types of food-poisoning organisms is the fact that it rarely causes outbreaks, and therefore does not tend to grab the headlines. However if the Food Standards Agency are to meet their target of reducing the number of food poisoning cases by 20% by 2006, **we must tackle Campylobacter.**

Food-borne disease in England and Wales

Organism	Cases in 2001	Cases in 2002
Campylobacter	56,420	46,484
Salmonella	16,174	14,607
Food-borne viruses	1,604	3,640
E coli O157	693	573