A European Union-wide baseline survey on Campylobacter in broiler batches and on Campylobacter and Salmonella on broiler carcasses was carried out in 2008. A total of 10,132 broiler batches were sampled from 561 slaughterhouses in 26 European Union Member States and two countries not belonging to the European Union. From each randomly selected batch the caecal contents of 10 slaughtered broilers were collected, pooled and examined for Campylobacter. From the same batch one carcass was collected after chilling and the neck skin together with the breast skin was examined for the presence of Campylobacter and Salmonella, in addition to the determination of the Campylobacter counts. Campylobacter was detected in pooled caecal contents of broilers and on broiler carcasses in all participating countries. At Community level the prevalence of Campylobacter-colonised broiler batches was 71.2% and that of Campylobacter-contaminated broiler carcasses was 75.8%. The Member State prevalence varied from 2.0% to 100.0% and from 4.9% to 100.0%, for caecal contents and carcasses, respectively. The results of the counts of Campylobacter on broiler carcasses showed substantial variation among the countries in contamination levels. About two-thirds of the Campylobacter isolates from the pooled caecal contents as well as from the broiler carcasses were identified as Campylobacter jejuni, while one-third was Campylobacter coli. Twenty-two Member States and one non-Member State isolated Salmonella on the broiler carcasses, with a Community prevalence of 15.6%. This prevalence varied widely among the Member States, from 0.0% to 26.6%. However, one Member State had an exceptionally high prevalence of 85.6% with the majority of isolates being S. Infantis. The Community prevalence of Salmonella Enteritidis or Salmonella Typhimurium-contaminated broiler carcasses was 3.6%. Salmonella Infantis and Salmonella Enteritidis were the two most frequently isolated serovars on broiler carcasses in the EU and accounted for about one-third and one-sixth of the Salmonella isolates, respectively.

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