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Report on the monitoring of zoonoses and food-borne disease outbreaks

Data for 2024

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Summary

Numbers of human cases of the most common zoonotic pathogens increased in 2024.

Campylobacteriosis was once again, by some distance, the zoonosis most often recorded in humans. A total of 8,280 laboratory-confirmed cases of Campylobacter infection were reported: a marked increase compared to 2023 (6,762 cases).

Salmonellosis remains the second most reported zoonosis in Switzerland and also showed a marked increase, with 2,344 laboratory-confirmed cases recorded in humans in 2024 (compared with 1,623 in the previous year). This corresponds to a reporting rate of 26 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants. At 128, the number of Salmonella infections in animals in 2024 was similar to that in previous years (124 in 2023). Principally affected were dogs, cattle and reptiles.

With a total of 1,361 reported cases in 2024, there has been a further increase in foodborne human infections caused by **Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli* (STEC)** compared to previous years (2023: 1,225 cases). The resulting reporting rate of 15 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants is the highest since mandatory reporting was introduced in 1999. Whether the rise is still explained by increased testing thanks to multiplex PCR methods, improving the frequency of detection, is currently unclear.

In 2024, 51 human cases (2023: 74 cases) of foodborne ***Listeria monocytogenes*** infection were reported. Whole genome sequencing allowed 22 cases to be assigned to a single cluster and the source of infection to be identified in three clusters.

The year saw a total of 186 reported human cases of **tularaemia**, corresponding to 2.1 cases per 100,000 inhabitants. The long-standing rising trend continued in 2024. The reason for the increase is unknown, but it could be due at least in part to greater awareness among the medical profession. Tick bites were the main route of infection.

A total of 151 human cases of **acute Q fever** were reported in 2024, corresponding to a reporting rate of 1.7 new infections per 100,000 inhabitants. This is the highest figure since mandatory reporting was introduced in 2012. The cases were spread throughout Switzerland and could not be attributed to an outbreak.

The reason for the marked increase in most zoonoses is unclear. One possible cause might be exceptional climate conditions, especially the severe weather seen across Switzerland.

A total of 43 **outbreaks of foodborne disease** were reported by the Swiss inspection authorities in 2024. At least 347 people fell ill, at least 16 were hospitalised and there were two deaths. Most of these outbreaks (42) were confined to a single canton. One outbreak affected 14 cantons and has been ongoing since 2022.