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Campylobacter control

Currently there are no effective control strategies for Campylobacter Spp. in poultry and so work focuses around the following:

Vaccination

There are no commercial vaccines for campylobacter and the commensal nature of campylobacter and the great antigenic variations between campylobacter strains make it very difficult to prepare an effective vaccine.

Work with a recombinant campylobacter vaccine is looking promising in terms of reducing campylobacter load in the caeca but whether this is effective against all strains has yet to be fully elucidated.

Competitive exclusion

Several studies have been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of competitive exclusion and although some protection was conferred in the laboratory this was not strong enough to stand up to field challenges. This protection was even less when pure cultures of the bacterium were used instead of faecal or caecal mucus suspensions or intestinal homogenates.

None of the currently available competitive exclusion products is effective in the field in terms of campylobacter control.

Biosecurity

Where no single intervention strategy is successful the importance of good biosecurity is increased and several studies have shown that improving biosecurity reduces campylobacter infection in broiler flocks.

Unfortunately campylobacter is widespread in the poultry farm environment so flocks can become contaminated from multiple sources.

Other strategies

These have included phage therapy, feed and/or water additives and bacteriocin based treatments. To date none of these has provided a wonder cure but further work is needed.