

Proposal A1111

Bacteriophage S16 & FO1a as a Processing Aid

Major Procedure

Summary

The NSW Food Authority supports the use of bacteriophages S16 and FO1a preparation (SamonelexTM) to reduce/kill *Salmonella* in fresh meat and poultry products during post-slaughter processing. However, this emerging technology must be used in conjunction with a food safety program.

Salmonellosis is one of the major causes of food-borne illnesses in Australia. Any technological development that could help reduce the number of *Salmonella* related infections and outbreaks would be significantly beneficial for the food industry and improve public health.

Specific Issues

The Authority is satisfied that the application of the bacteriophage preparation (SamonelexTM) in fresh meat and poultry products is technologically justified and does not pose a risk to human health.

Technical Concerns

It is stated in the application that bacteriophages are species-specific and even specific for only a limited number of strains. It would be useful to have more information about its effectiveness against large number of *Salmonella* strains and serotypes (>2000).

Salmonella is well-known for its active adaptability to changing environmental conditions and ability to mutate for better protection against antimicrobial agents. Addressing the potential risks of phage-resistant *Salmonella* strains and serotypes is important for successful application of this preparation.

As raised in previous submissions, the Authority still has concerns over the categorisation of the bacteriophage as a processing aid by the applicant and by FSANZ in the submission report. NSW considers that the practical determination of which foods the phage would be permitted in would lack clarity and potentially cause confusion. NSW suggests that the use of the phage may be more suitably categorised as a food additive under Standard 1.3.1. As the preparation SamonelexTM will be added or applied to the product like other antimicrobial agents (preservatives), therefore it should be considered a food additive.

ENDS

The views expressed in this submission may or may not accord with those of other NSW Government agencies. The NSW Food Authority has a policy which encourages the full range of NSW agency views to be submitted during the standards development stages before final assessment. Other relevant NSW Government agencies are aware of and agree with this policy.