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## Scientific Interpretive Summary

### **Possible role of farmers' overalls in transmitting *Campylobacter* on broiler chicken farms**

Maintaining adequate biosecurity is a continual challenge on broiler chicken farms and there are various pathways through which *Campylobacter* can be transferred from one broiler shed to another. One possible pathway is farmers' overalls.

NZFA commissioned a science project by ESR to indicate whether overall garments worn by farmers entering sheds housing *Campylobacter* positive broiler chicken flocks could be contaminated with the pathogen. A further aspect of the study was to determine if debris shaken loose from overalls could transfer infection to other sheds.

Ten overall garments from ten broiler sheds that housed *Campylobacter*-infected broilers were tested for *Campylobacter* carriage. Loose debris shaken from two overalls tested positive for *Campylobacter* by enrichment. One of the two overalls also tested positive for *Campylobacter* when the overall garment was rinsed and the rinsate enriched for *Campylobacter*. These findings demonstrated that farm overalls worn in sheds housing infected poultry flocks can become contaminated and this introduces the likelihood of disseminating *Campylobacter* in poultry farms from infected sheds to those that are *Campylobacter*-free.

This study demonstrates another means of carriage of *Campylobacter* from broiler shed to broiler shed. One means of minimizing this transfer is to use shed-dedicated overalls and provide procedures (and location) to properly change overalls so that the shed-specific overalls would not become contaminated when put on.

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