

COUNTRY (/NEWS/COUNTRY)

Salmonella not detected on NZ poultry farms since September

11:20 am on 23 November 2022



Salmonella enteritidis has not been detected on farm since early September. Photo: 123RF

Efforts to eradicate salmonella enteritidis from the poultry industry are on track with no properties under restricted movement controls

The bacteria strain was first found in an Auckland hatchery in March last year.

Since then 14 sites tested positive for the strain, about 550 thousand birds have been culled and 130 people became unwell with the bacteria.

Salmonella enteritidis can cause abdominal cramps, diarrhoea, fever, headache and vomiting in people.

New Zealand Food Safety deputy director general Vincent Arbuckle said control efforts were paying off.

Salmonella enteritidis had not been detected on farm since early September and the last case detected in a human was May, he said.

"It's almost a textbook example of the regulator working with the poultry industry and individual farmers, what was a pretty serious outbreak in 2021. Through careful work with the industry, we believe we've got a well contained now.

"We've had only a handful of human cases in 2022 and the last detection and poultry operator was in September this year. The new regulatory control systems seem to be working well.

"I think it's a good example of how working with the industry, you can catch and contain a problem."

The bacteria strain was in the environment so it would never be fully eradicated, he said, but it was important to keep it out of the poultry sector.

"There are no properties currently under notice of direction. "We had at least three or four at a time in 2021, which was really hard on the farmers involved, so to get to this point is a big achievement."

Monitoring and testing would continue, he said.