



Communications activities on zoonoses

EFSA Stakeholder consultative platform meeting
Parma, 29-30 June 2011

What are zoonoses?

- Infections or diseases that can be **transmitted** (directly or indirectly) **between animals and humans**

Various ways of transmission

- Consumption of contaminated food or drinking water = food-borne zoonotic diseases
 - *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, viruses
- By vectors, e.g. mosquitoes, fleas, ticks = vector-borne zoonotic diseases
 - Lyme disease, West-Nile disease
- Direct contact or close proximity to infected animals = non-food-borne zoonotic diseases
 - Avian influenza, Q fever

Zoonoses in the EU and EFSA's role

- Significant **public health threat** (+320.000 human cases reported yearly)
- Joint efforts by EC, the Member States and EU agencies have led to a decrease in salmonellosis cases by almost 50% in 5 years

EFSA's role

- **Independent scientific support and advice** on human and animal health aspects of zoonoses => used by risk managers in setting policies and defining control options

Main tasks

- **Collection and analysis of data** on zoonotic agents in animals, food and feed
- **Assessment of risks** for the food chain
- **Recommendations** for prevention and reduction

Recent communications activities:

E. coli outbreak

Support to the European Commission

3 June **EFSA/ECDC health advice** published on the website

8 June **EFSA/ECDC urgent reports** on STEC in vegetables and monitoring of VTEC strains in foods & from outbreaks including **press release and updated health advice**

26 June **EFSA sets up task force** to coordinate investigations to track down the source of any contaminated sprouted seeds in EU.

News stories 25 and 26 June

Key communications issues in a major outbreak

- **European level coordination** between risk assessors (ECDC, EFSA, ERL, EMA, JRC) and risk managers (EC, MS) in outbreak investigation and risk communication
- **International cooperation**

Communications activities on zoonoses

May 2010 – June 2011

- 2 press releases
- 7 web news stories
- 48 media queries (of which 40 in May-June 2011 due to E. coli)
- 1 interview (on E. coli)
- Regular articles in EFSA's newsletters
- Regular updates of dedicated pages on EFSA website
- Publication of Community Summary Report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks (March 2011)
 - 70 articles in media, 99% reported on EFSA key messages

Press release: Annual EU summary report on zoonoses and food-borne outbreaks

➤ 70 articles in the media

➤ 99% of articles reported at least one of key messages

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EFSA and ECDC zoonoses report shows *Salmonella* in humans falls for fifth consecutive year

Press Release
22 March 2011

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) have published their annual report on zoonoses[1] and food-borne outbreaks in the European Union for 2009. The report shows *Salmonella* cases in humans fell by 17% in 2009, marking a decrease for the fifth consecutive year. The report also shows that between 2008 and 2009 the number of laying hen flocks infected with *Salmonella*[2] fell by 9%.

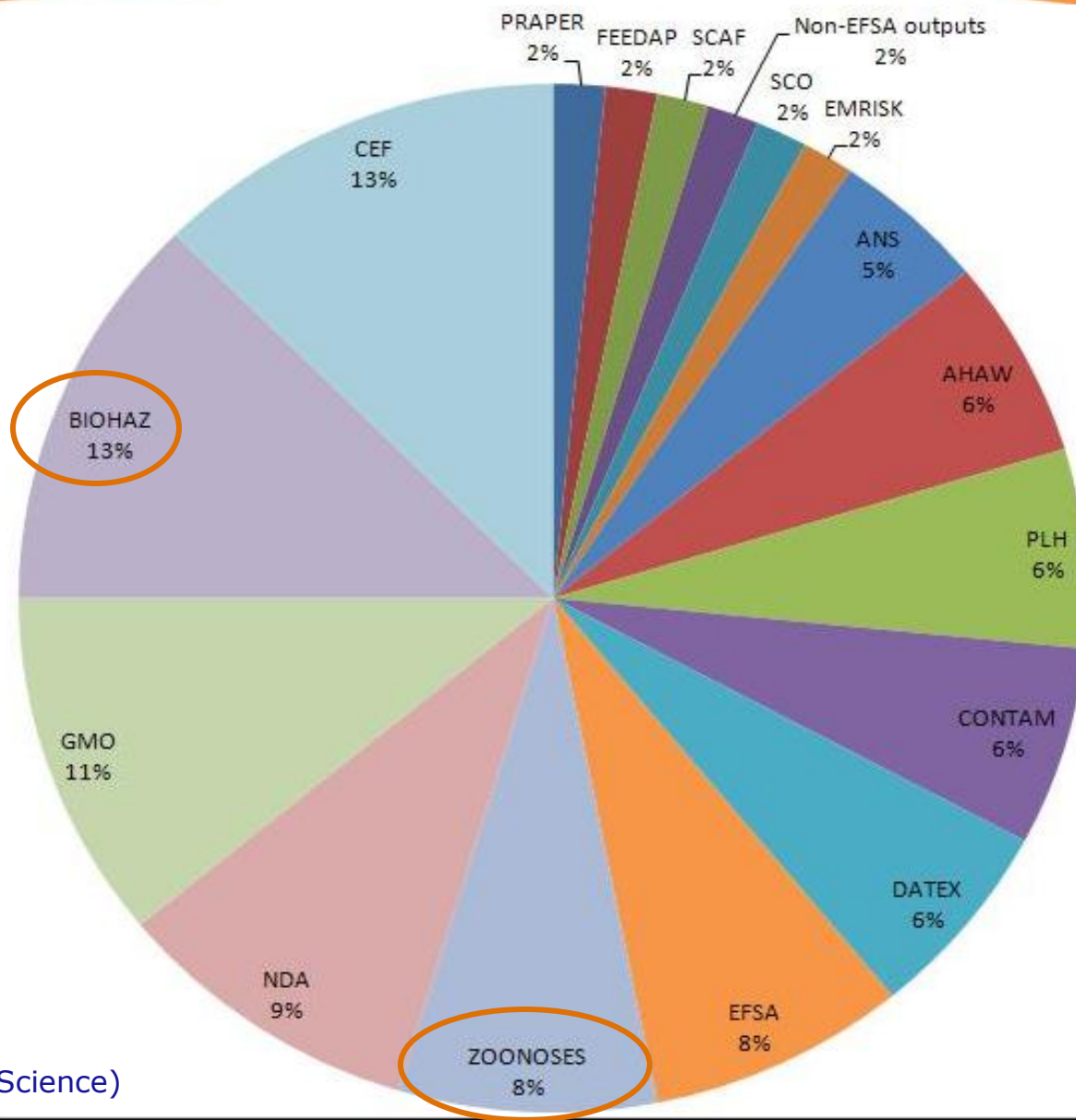
Campylobacteriosis remained the most reported zoonotic disease in humans, showing a slight increase with 198,252 cases in 2009 compared to 190,566 in 2008 (+4%). In foodstuffs, *Campylobacter*, which can cause diarrhoea and fever, was mostly found in raw poultry meat; and in live animals, it was found in poultry, pigs and cattle.

"The fall in *Salmonella* cases in humans is a great achievement and indicates that the control measures put in place by EU Member States and the European Commission are working. EFSA, in cooperation with its partners, will continue to support all efforts to reduce all zoonotic diseases across the EU," said Hubert Deluyker, EFSA's Director of Scientific Cooperation and Assistance.

See also

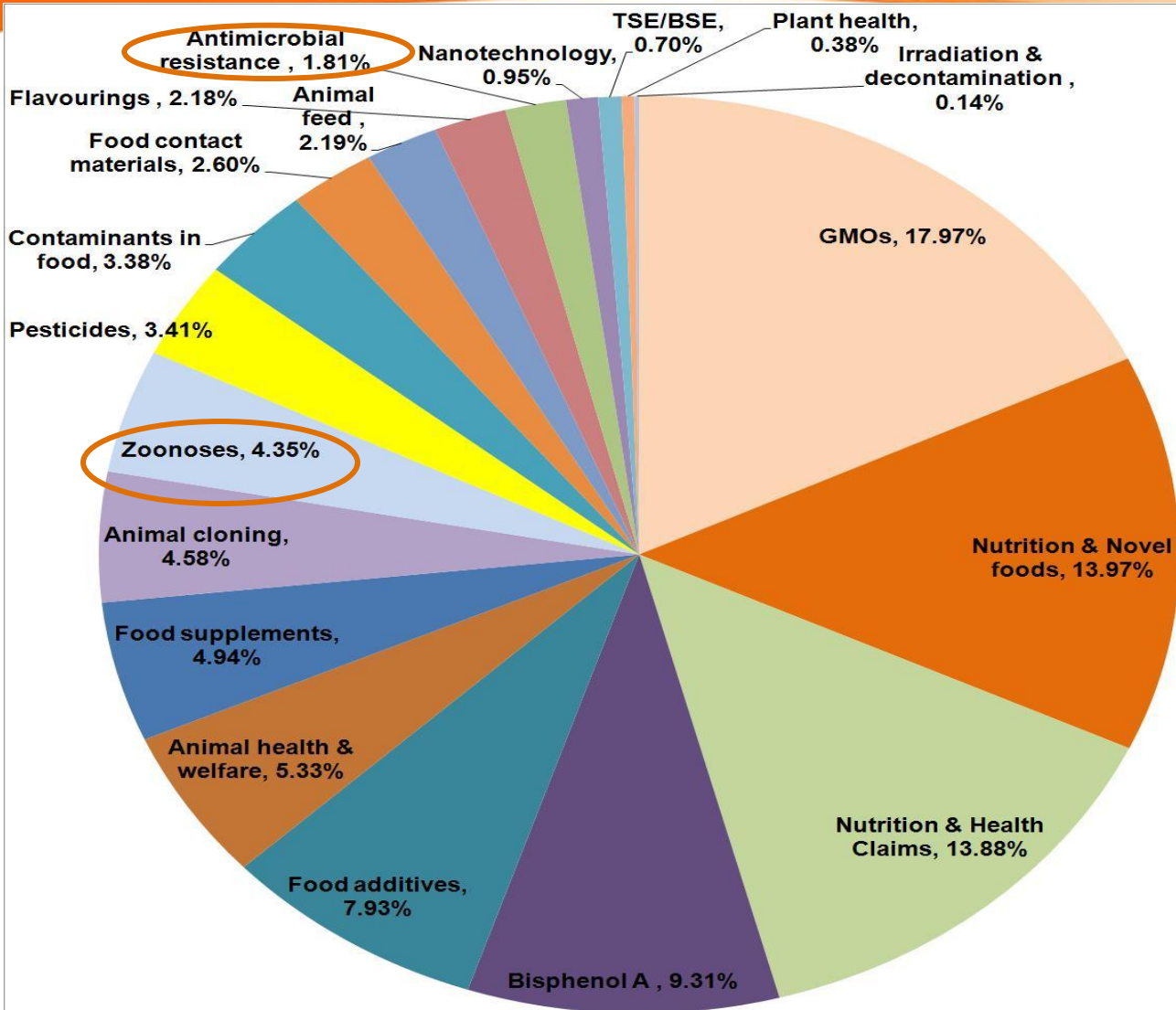
- Topic: Food-borne diseases
- Biological monitoring homepage

Share (%) of press releases/web stories in 2010



Total 60 activities (Science)

Media coverage (%) per issue - 2010



Challenges and opportunities for communication

Challenges

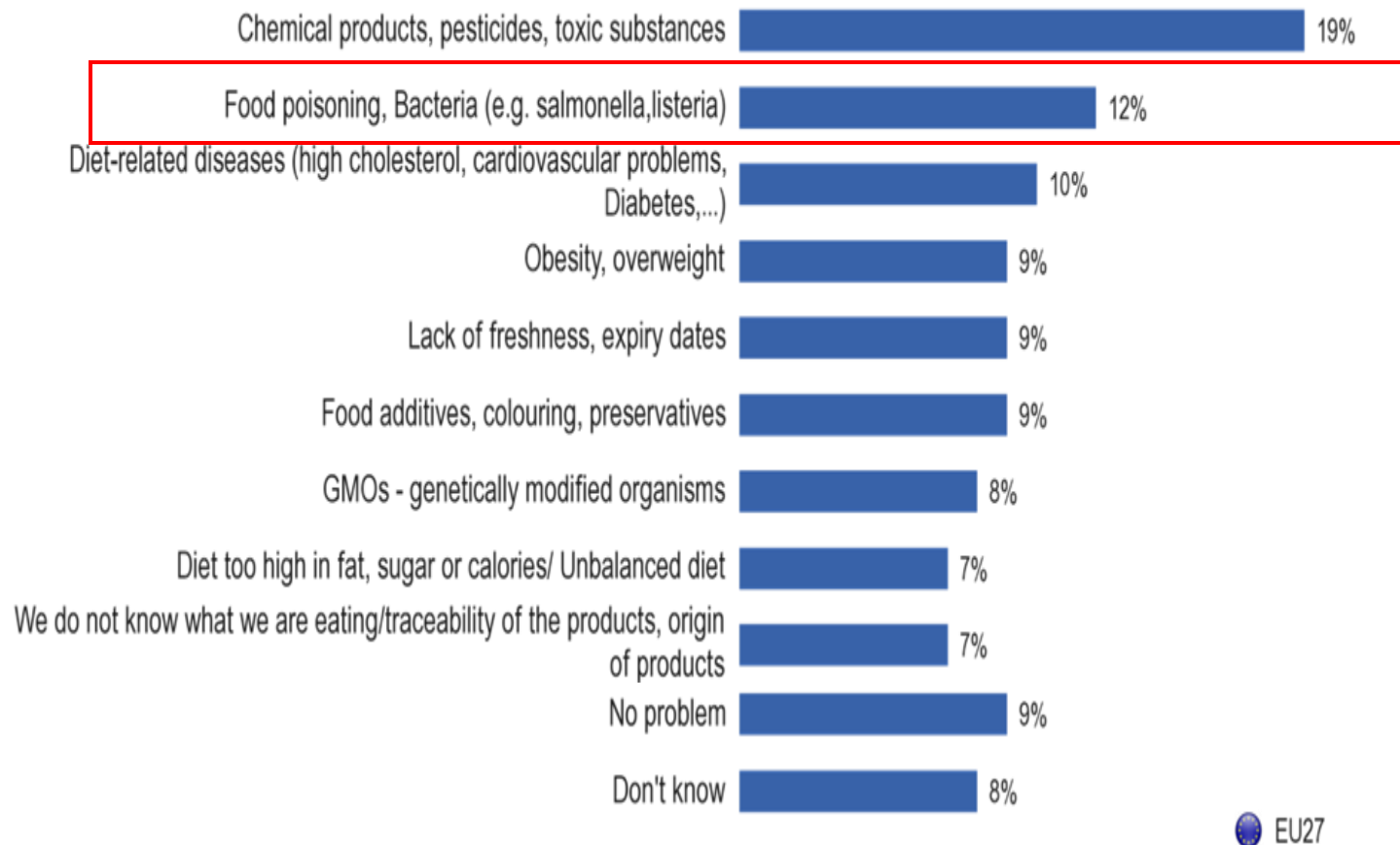
- Impact of zoonoses and the successes already achieved **not well known** among EU consumers
 - more concerned about chemical hazards
- **Less media coverage** than for many other areas
 - Positive news travels less well
 - Significant media coverage on annual Community Summary Reports – country angle

Opportunities

- Important **public health threat**, concerns wide variety of actors in EU: risk managers, risk assessors, Member States, stakeholders etc.
- **Positive outcomes**: joint efforts have led to reduction of Salmonella in humans and animals
- **Trust** among EU consumers

EU consumers more concerned about chemical than biological hazards

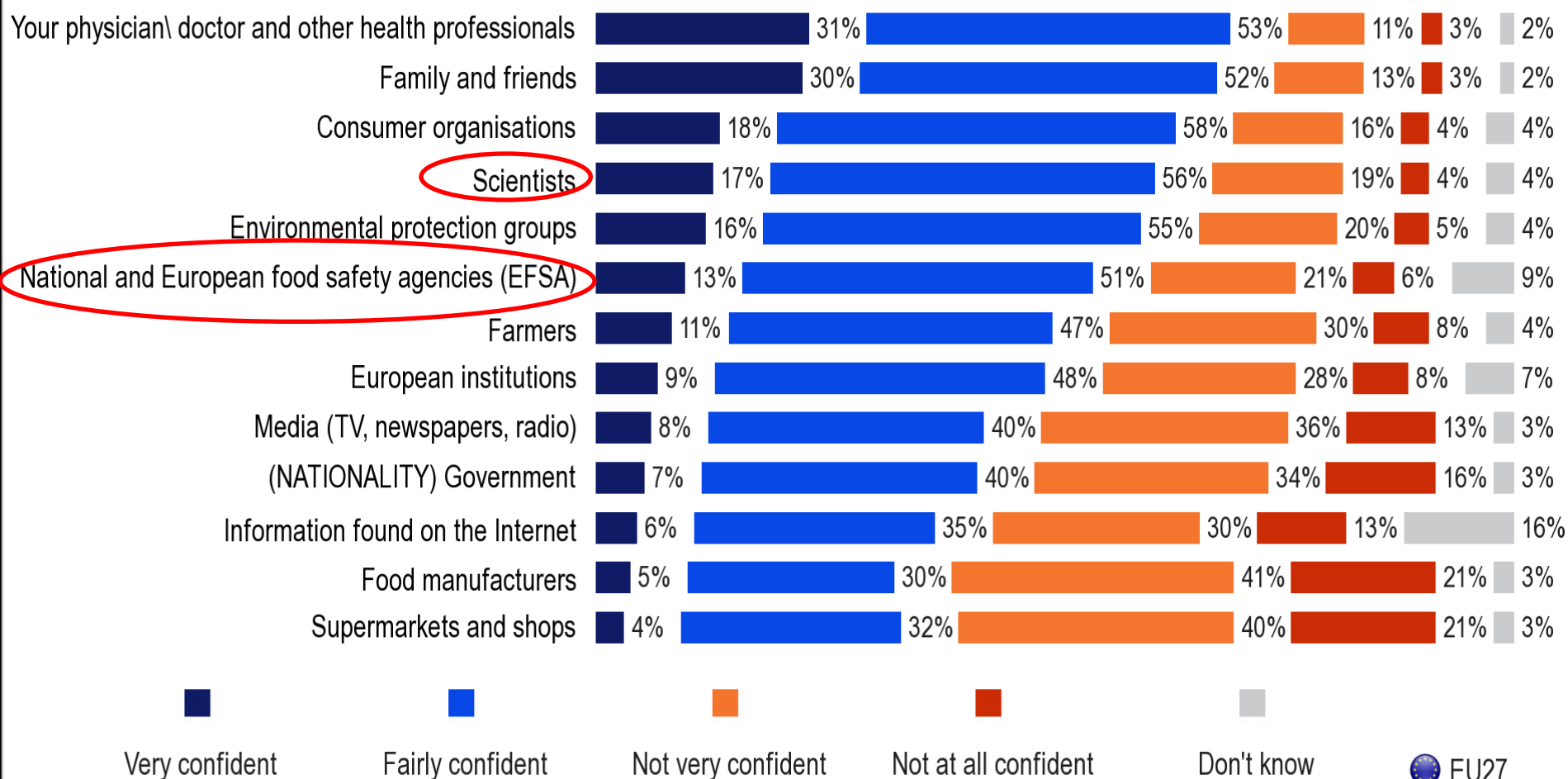
Chemical products, pesticides and other toxic substances are the major concerns



Source: 2010 Eurobarometer on Food-related Risks

QF3: Could you tell me in your own words, what are all the things that come to your mind when thinking about possible problems or risks associated with food and eating?

Risk perceptions: Who do consumers trust?



Moving forward in risk communications: Thematic approach

Integrated communications plans:

- across all tools and channels
- themes reflecting both consumer concerns & public health priorities
- continuous “campaign” approach with key milestones (eg. zoonoses: annual report, baseline surveys, opinions of BIOHAZ, AHAW,...)
- covering all relevant aspects of EFSA’s work in an area



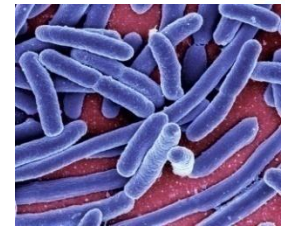
Zoonoses: Today

Rabies

What is it?

Why important?

E. coli



Campylobacter

Vector-borne

Deadly?

Dangerous?

What: EFSA Role?

Listeriose



BSE

MS Role?



Rabies

Salmonella

Not Important?

Close contact

Food-borne Q Fever

Anti-microbial resistance?

Harmless?

Brucellosis

Clostridium



How transmitted?

Cysticercus

ECDC Role?

Rabies

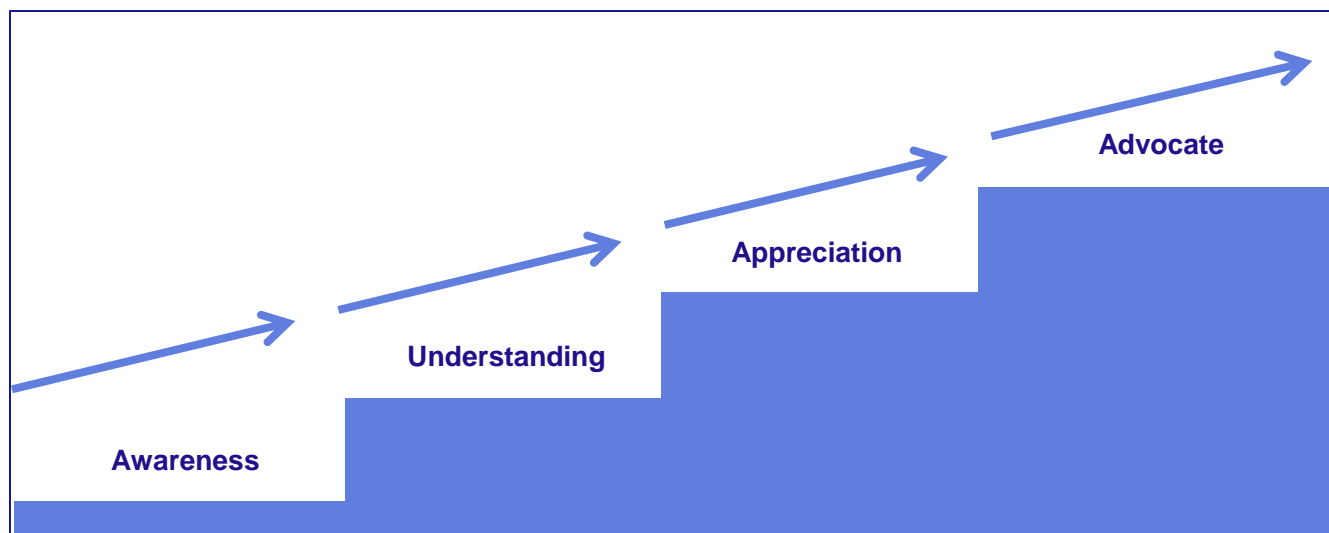
How: EFSA helps

Trichinella

Thematic approach: Zoonoses

AIM:

Help our target audiences to become aware, understand, appreciate and advocate our work and how we cooperate with others in the area of zoonoses



Integrated communications approach to zoonoses

- Increase impact & effectiveness
- More meaningful, relevant communications, i.e help users better understand context & rationale for EFSA's work
- Targeted communications to key audiences (through website, specialised media, newsletters)
- Opportunity to strengthen co-operation
- More efficient/effective use of resources

- Communicate the benefits, results, impact of EFSA's work over time
- Move focus from individual outputs to "key issues"
 - ⇒ Integrating all outputs in a given area but focusing on those which provide "news" value
- More effective use of website to better explain overall work and structure thematic approach (e.g. new topics and sub-topics)
- New tools (eg fact sheets, videos, leaflets with MS...)

Focal areas and upcoming main outputs 2011-2013

Key focal areas:

2011-2012

Salmonella

Antimicrobial resistance

2013 ->

Listeria

Campylobacter

- EU Summary Reports on zoonoses, food-borne outbreaks and antimicrobial resistance 2010-2013
- Food-borne viruses – July 2011
- Public health impact of setting new targets of *Salmonella* in turkeys - March 2012
- *Listeria* baseline survey in ready-to-eat foods (cheeses, salmon and meat products) - 2013

Questions for discussion by our group

- Successes scored and hurdles faced in risk communications
- In your experience, what are the most effective ways of being informed about EFSA's work?
- When EFSA proactively communicated on a topic that is of direct relevance to your organisation what do you do with this information?
- How can EFSA work more effectively with you in order to strengthen outreach and coherence of risk communications?
- Recommendations for EFSA