

# Control of *Salmonella* in laying flocks

## No 6 - Hand hygiene

### Background

- *Salmonella*, and other pathogens, can contaminate hands after handling contaminated food, using toilets or handling items that have been contaminated by infected wildlife, pets or droppings.
- Contaminated hands can also spread infection between flocks on the same farm or between farms.
- Hands can look clean but can still carry enough *Salmonella* to contaminate a feeder or drinker, which may then start a flock infection.
- In colony units, contaminated hands are more of a risk than boots.



### Actions you can take

Washing hands thoroughly and then sanitising them is proven to reduce the number of disease causing bacteria.

- Provide easy access facilities for washing hands and drying with disposable paper towels on entry to the site and before entering each house.
- Ensure that visitors and staff wash and dry their hands before entering each house.
- Use a notice on each door to reinforce this.
- Use a nail brush if needed and ensure all visible dirt is removed.
- After drying hands with disposable paper towels, use a hand sanitiser gel (70% alcohol).
- Use disposable plastic gloves for 'dirty jobs' such as collecting dead birds or dealing with manure or blocked drains.
- Do not use the same gloves in different houses, unless they are disinfected on the inside and outside.
- Hands must still be kept clean, even if gloves are used.
- Where it is not possible to wash hands, apply 70% alcohol sanitizer, rub in for 15 seconds, dry hands on disposable paper towel and then re-apply sanitizer for another 15 seconds. This procedure is almost as good as hand washing.



**Hand hygiene is a key factor in the transmission of food borne diseases and one of the least costly interventions to implement.**