

MRSA Affects Two-thirds of Danish Pig Farms

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DENMARK - The food and agriculture minister admits that "previous efforts have not been enough" as a new study shows that the methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bacterium is more widespread than previously thought.

- Second Danish death attributed to MRSA (15 November, 2014)
- Ministry's MRSA reaction to be investigated (06 October, 2014)
- Every fifth pack of pork carries MRSA (24 September, 2014)
- Up to 12,000 infected with MRSA: experts (25 August, 2014)

The presence of the antibiotic-resistant MRSA bacteria in Danish piggeries has doubled in just four years.

An analysis has revealed that MRSA is now present in two out of every three pig production sites in Denmark.

The new study comes in a year that has seen one food-related scandal after another.

Danish consumers have had to deal with *Listeria* outbreaks, *Salmonella* infections and a massive increase in the presence of MRSA CC398, a variant that can be transmitted from livestock to humans.

According to the Danish State Serum Institute (SSI), the CC398 variant only accounted for two percent of all MRSA cases in 2007 but this year it is up to 35 per cent.

Earlier this year, Henrik Westh, the head of the Capital Region's MRSA research centre, and Hans Jørn Kolmos, a professor of clinical microbiology at the University of Southern Denmark, said that as many as 12,000 people in Denmark are likely infected with MRSA without knowing it.

At least two people have died as a result of an MRSA infection.

And a spot check of pork products in Danish supermarkets showed that every fifth pack of pork carries MRSA.

Food and Agriculture Minister, Dan Jørgensen, said that the latest MRSA revelations prove that the status quo is not enough.

He said: "The experts have provided their suggestions for how we can limit MRSA, but this also proves that there are no quick fixes. For me, it is clear that the previous efforts we have made here in Denmark have not been enough."

The Minister added that he will work with parliament to find a "comprehensive action plan" to combat the rising prevalence of MRSA.

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