

Rodent control and Salmonella Enteritidis

Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) has been detected on several NSW properties and one Victorian poultry farm following serious outbreaks of gastroenteritis (aka “gastro”) in people. It is a notifiable disease in Australia because of its human health risk.

Rats and mice can spread SE and not show symptoms or be impacted by the disease. These bacteria can live in rodent populations and their droppings for long periods. As a result, controlling populations of rodents is a critical step to reduce the risk of spreading SE.

One infected rat can deposit millions of SE bacteria in a poultry shed in a single day, and can spread SE by moving between sheds and nearby properties. Chickens may be exposed to rats and mice, either by direct contact with them or by consuming rodent droppings if they are present on the floors of sheds or in poultry feed.

Producers should take steps to control rodents by ensuring that an effective control program is in place at all times. As a producer, you need to:

- select appropriate rodent baits and follow the instructions so you use them properly¹
- place rodent bait stations in areas where rodent activity is likely to be high
- use enough bait stations in order to be effective (e.g. at regular intervals around shed perimeters)
- inspect bait stations and replace baits regularly
- monitor for signs of rodent activity and change your baiting program if it is not effective
- keep records of rodent activity, the baits you are using, where they are placed and when they are checked and replaced.

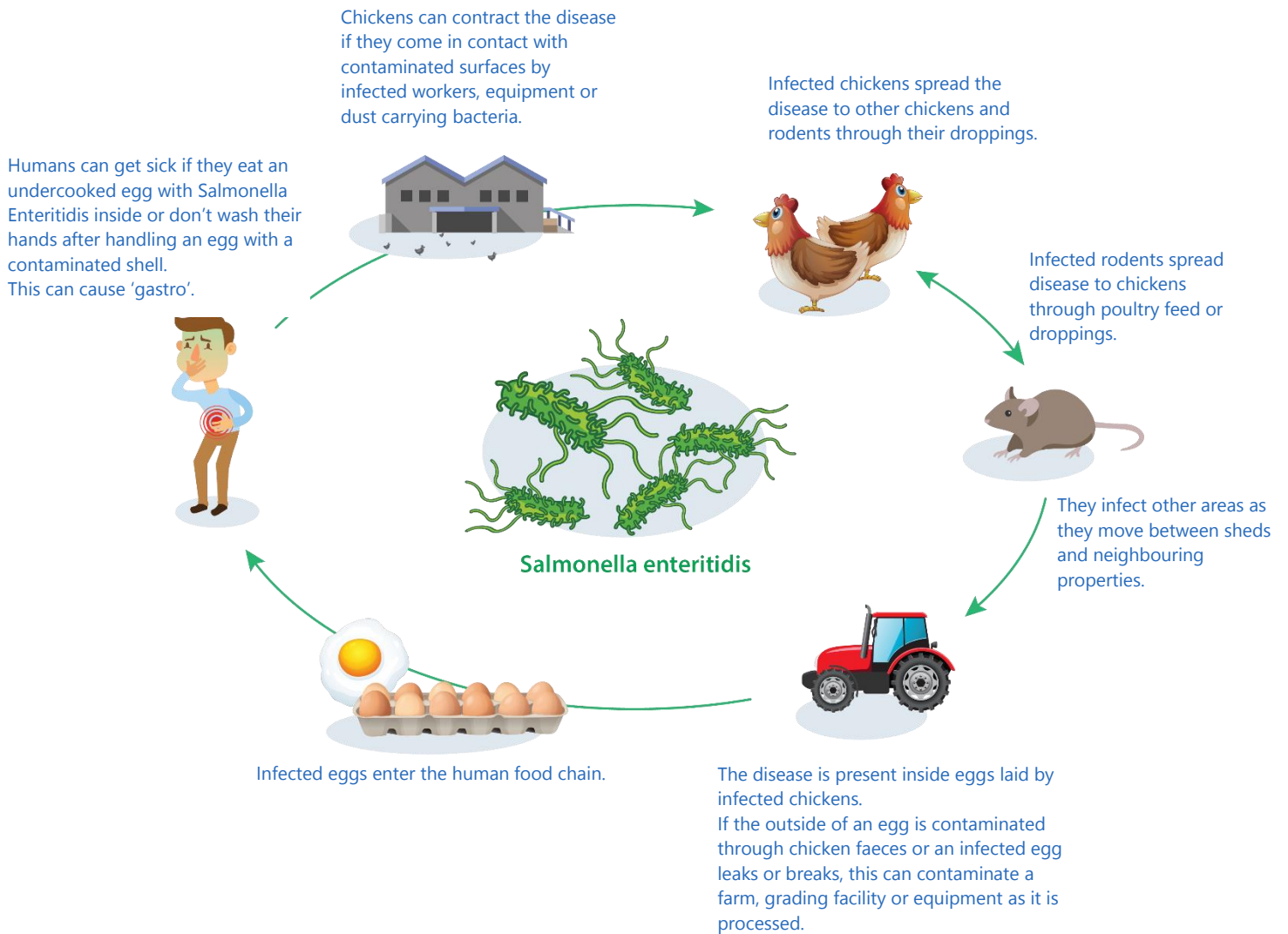
Other rodent control measures you should consider:

- removing vegetation (e.g. mowing grass) and debris (e.g. piles of wood or metal) from around poultry sheds to eliminate places where rodents may nest and hide
- storing poultry feed in vermin-proof areas
- disposing of any dead birds promptly in a vermin-proof facility
- immediately removing unused or spilled feed
- maintaining sheds and equipment to reduce rodent entry (e.g. repair holes where rodents may enter sheds) and minimise rodent attraction.

If you are concerned about the level of rodent activity on your farm, get help from a licensed rodent control professional and ask them to review your rodent management plan.

¹ Always use rodenticides in compliance with Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) label instructions

Like all visitors, rodent control professionals must practice strict biosecurity with their clothing, equipment and vehicles, and should also observe appropriate periods of no contact with other poultry before entering your farm.



Further information:

E: quarantine@dpi.nsw.gov.au

T: +61 1800 680 244 (option 6) during NSW business hours

NSW DPI - www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/poultry-and-birds

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