

# Non-typhoidal infections in pigs: a closer look at epidemiology, pathogenesis and control

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2	Non-typhoidal Salmonella infections in pigs:
3	a closer look at epidemiology, pathogenesis and control
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#### 26 Abstract

Contaminated pork is an important source of Salmonella infections in humans. The increasing
multiple antimicrobial resistance associated with pork-related serotypes such as Salmonella
Typhimurium and Salmonella Derby may become a serious human health hazard in the near
future. Governments try to anticipate the issue of non-typhoid Salmonella infections in pork
by starting monitoring programmes and coordinating control measures worldwide. A
thorough knowledge of how these serotypes interact with the porcine host should form the
basis for the development and optimisation of these monitoring and control programmes.
During the recent years, many researchers have focussed on different aspects of the
pathogenesis of non-typhoid Salmonella infections in pigs. The present manuscript reviews
the importance of pigs and pork as a source for salmonellosis in humans and discusses
commonly accepted and recent insights in the pathogenesis of non-typhoid Salmonella
infections in pigs, with emphasis on Salmonella Typhimurium, and to relate this knowledge to
possible control measures.

#### Keywords

 $\begin{tabular}{ll} 43 & Non-typhoidal \it Salmonella-pig-epidemiology-pathogenesis-control \\ \end{tabular}$ 

Salmonella Choleraesuis was the first Salmonella serotype isolated from pigs (Salmon and

#### 1. Introduction

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Smith, 1886), only 2 years after the first isolation ever of Salmonella, performed by Gaffky in 1884 (Le Minor, 1994). In the course of time, more than 2,400 different serotypes were isolated from different animal species, including pigs. Salmonella serotypes are differentiated based on their somatic and flagellar antigens. On the basis of the level of host restriction (Uzzau et al., 2000), Salmonella serotypes can also be classified as: 1) serotypes capable of causing a typhoid-like disease in a single host species (host restricted serotypes, for example Salmonella Typhi in humans); 2) serotypes associated with one host species, but also able to cause disease in other hosts (host adapted serotypes, for example Salmonella Choleraesuis and Salmonella Typhisuis in swine; Timoney et al., 1988; Selander et al., 1990) and 3) the vast majority of the remaining serotypes which rarely produce systemic infections but are able to colonize the alimentary tract of a wide range of animals (broad host range serotypes; for example Salmonella Typhimurium and Salmonella Derby; Fedorka-Cray et al., 2000). Infection of pigs with the swine adapted serotypes Typhisuis and Choleraesuis usually result in swine typhoid, characterized by severe systemic disease that is often fatal. This disease has been the subject of intense research (Gray et al., 1996; Lichtensteiger and Vimr, 2003; Chiu et al., 2004; Chiu et al., 2005; Ku et al., 2005; Nishio et al., 2005; Zhao et al. 2006). The pathogenesis in pigs of infection with broad-host range serotypes of Salmonella was largely neglected until recently. Although these infections may result in enteric and fatal systemic disease, infected pigs generally carry these serotypes asymptomatically in the tonsils, the intestines and the gut-associated lymphoid tissue (GALT) (Wood et al., 1989; Fedorka-Cray et al., 2000). Such carriers are a major reservoir of Salmonella and pose an important threat to animal and human health. A thorough knowledge of how these serotypes

interact with the porcine host should form the basis for the development and evaluation of
efficient monitoring programmes and control measures (Boyle et al., 2007). In the present
review, the pathogenesis of infections with broad host range *Salmonella* serotypes is
considered, with emphasis on *Salmonella* Typhimurium and, if relevant, in relation to
common monitoring and control programs.

#### 2. Pigs and pork as a source of salmonellosis in humans

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#### 2.1.Epidemiology

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During the 1950s and 1960s, Salmonella Choleraesuis, including variant Kunzendorf, was the predominant serotype isolated from pigs worldwide (Fedorka-Cray et al., 2000). At the present time, Salmonella Choleraesuis is still highly prevalent in North America and Asia, but is found rarely in Australia and Western European countries (Wilcock and Schwartz, 1992; Fedorka-Cray et al., 2000; Chiu et al., 2004; Davies et al., 2004; Chang et al., 2005; Nollet et al., 2006). Pigs can be infected by several Salmonella serotypes and the occurrence of these serotypes is also partly geographically determined (Fedorka-Cray et al., 2000; Loynachan et al., 2004). All serotypes isolated from pigs are considered a hazard for public health by the European food safety authority (EFSA) (EFSA, 2006b). However, worldwide, the most commonly isolated non-typhoid serotypes in pigs and pork are Salmonella Typhimurium, including variant Copenhagen, and Salmonella Derby (Letellier et al., 1999; Davies et al., 2004; Gebreyes et al., 2004, Valdezate et al., 2005; EFSA, 2006b; Rostagno et al., 2007). Since its spectacular rise in the nineties until recently, Salmonella Enteritidis remained the most important serotype causing salmonellosis in humans in many countries. However, due to a remarkable drop in egg-related Salmonella Enteritidis infections in 2005 and 2006 in different European countries (Gillespie et al., 2005; Mossong et al., 2006; Collard et al., 2007), Salmonella Typhimurium has now become the predominant serotype isolated from humans in Europe and pigs are probably the most important source of infection with this serotype in these countries. It has been estimated in various European countries that 15% to 23% of all cases of salmonellosis in humans, are related to the consumption of pork (Borch et al., 1996; Berends et al., 1998; Steinbach and Hartung, 1999; Van Pelt et al., 2000) and pork-

related outbreaks of non-typhoid salmonellosis in humans with fatal outcome have been described (Jansen et al., 2007). The relative importance of *Salmonella* contaminated pork as a cause of salmonellosis in humans in the European countries is likely to be even higher today, due to the decline in cases of disease caused by *Salmonella* Enteritidis. In the USA, statistical models have predicted that every year approximately 100,000 human cases of salmonellosis are related to the consumption of pork, with a corresponding annual social cost of approximately 80 million dollar (Miller et al., 2005). In addition, the number of reported salmonellosis cases in humans is probably an underestimation of the true incidence by factors between 5 and 20 (Mead et al., 1999; Tschäpe and Bockemühl, 2002). Table 1 provides an overview of the prevalence of *Salmonella* in pork isolated in various countries.

The public health risk of *Salmonella* infection from consumption of contaminated pork depends on multiple factors including the level infection in the pig herd (Hill et al., 2003; Nollet, 2005), hygiene during carcass processing in the slaughterhouse (Borch et al., 1996), meat storage and distribution conditions (Mann et al., 2004) and finally the handling of undercooked pork by the consumer (Hill et al., 2003). As a first step in an integrated European approach on quantitative microbiological risk assessment (QMRA), the EFSA is preparing to carry out a QMRA on *Salmonella* in pigs, from the farm to the table, stressing the importance EFSA attributes to this topic (EFSA, 2006b; Hugas et al., 2007).

#### 2.2.Antimicrobial resistance

Even though *Salmonella* infections in humans caused by non-typhoid serotypes are usually self-limiting, effective antimicrobial therapy is essential if systemic spread occurs (Chiu et al., 1999; Su et al., 2004; Hsu et al., 2005; Alcaine et al., 2007). Systemic spread is frequently seen in individuals with immunodeficiency due to immaturity, senescence,

124	chemotherapy, gastric hypoacidity, pregnancy or antecedent diseases. Together, individuals
125	with these conditions constitute the so-called YOPI (young, old, pregnant, immunodeficient)
126	segment of the population (Mossel et al., 2003). This group comprises 10-15% of the human
127	population.
128	An obvious increase in antimicrobial resistance in non-typhoid Salmonella serotypes has
129	already been demonstrated in the early 1990s and has since then become a global problem (Su
130	et al., 2004; Alcaine et al., 2007). The drug resistance rate, however, varies between different
131	serotypes. Salmonella Enteritidis, for example, shows only limited acquired resistance
132	compared to other important non-typhoid serotypes (Su et al., 2004). The prevalence of
133	acquired antimicrobial resistance is much higher in Salmonella Typhimurium. Salmonella
134	Typhimurium strains belonging to the phage type DT104 are often found to be simultaneously
135	resistant to 5 antimicrobial agents (ampicillin, chloramphenicol, streptomycin, sulphonamides
136	and tetracyclines; Helms et al., 2005). Phage type DT104 is frequently isolated from pigs or
137	pork (Threlfall, 2000; Gebreyes et al., 2004). Other phage types frequently isolated from pigs,
138	like DT120 and DT193 are notoriously multidrug-resistant (Gebreyes et al., 2004).
139	Salmonella Typhimurium strains resistant to 10 or more antimicrobial agents have been
140	reported (Poppe et al., 2002).
141	Due to the spread of resistance to conventional antibiotics, extended spectrum
142	cephalosporins and fluoroquinolones have become the drugs of choice to treat Salmonella
143	infections in humans (Stoycheva and Murdjeva, 2006). Fluoroquinolones are also often used
144	to treat the severe enteric fever form of salmonellosis in different animal species (Carter and
145	Quinn, 2000; Jones, 2004; Hall and German, 2005). However, this has led to regular reports
146	of resistance to these antibiotics as well, also in strains isolated from pigs and pork (Gazouli
147	et al., 1998; Molbak et al., 1999; Baraniak et al., 2002; Chiu et al., 2002; Wang et al., 2006;
148	Talavera-Rojas, 2007). Multidrug resistant Salmonella Typhimurium strains are also

149	prevalent in antimicrobial free swine production systems, despite the absence of antimicrobial
150	selection pressure (Thakur et al., 2007).
151	Clinical trials with new generation antimicrobials (azithromycin and gatifloxacin) that are
152	effective against multiresistant Salmonella strains are underway (Boyle et al., 2007)
153	Nevertheless, the increasing multiple antimicrobial resistance associated with pork-related
154	serotypes such as Salmonella Typhimurium and Salmonella Derby may become a serious
155	human health hazard in the near future (Hald et al., 2003; Akiba et al., 2006; Butaye et al.
156	2006; Vo et al., 2006; Alcaine et al., 2007). In addition, it has been reported that Salmonella
157	Choleraesuis and Salmonella Typhimurium can generate hybrid plasmids, consisting of
158	virulence genes on the one hand and of antimicrobial resistance genes on the other hand
159	possibly posing an even larger threat to public health (Chu et al., 2006)
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#### 2.3. Current monitoring and control programs

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The purpose of monitoring and control programs is to reduce the risk of public health problems arising from the consumption of contaminated pork, reducing human disease and maintaining consumer confidence. Salmonella control measures can be implemented at three levels: the pre-harvest level (on farm), the harvest level (transport to and procedures in the slaughterhouse) and the post-harvest level (cutting, processing, retail and food preparation at home).

Implementation of monitoring programs and coordination of control measures at harvest and post-harvest, are being used worldwide to prevent non-typhoidal Salmonella infections in humans from contaminated pork (Mossel et al., 2003; Chen et al., 2006; Padungtod and Kaneene, 2006; EFSA, 2006b; Hamilton et al. 2007; Larsen et al., 2007; Rajic et al., 2007).

Extensive national monitoring and control programs at the farm level are mostly
conducted in the European countries (regulation [EC] 2160/2003; Asai et al., 2002; Asai et
al., 2006; EFSA, 2006b; Hamilton et al. 2007; Larsen et al., 2007; Rajic et al., 2007). Only
the Scandinavian countries have been given low prevalence status by EFSA. In Sweden,
preharvest and harvest monitoring programmes are being implemented on both a compulsory
and a voluntary basis, using mainly bacteriological isolation to assess Salmonella
contamination (Wahlström et al., 2000; EFSA, 2006b). The Danish, British, Irish and German
programmes are based on serological testing of meat juice samples taken at the
slaughterhouse, thus categorising the pig herds according to their assessed risk of carrying
Salmonella into the slaughter plant (Nielsen et al., 2001; Davies et al., 2004; EFSA, 2006b;
Merle et al., 2007). Belgian and Dutch monitoring programmes are similar, but the serological
testing is currently performed on blood or serum samples collected on the farm (EFSA,
2006b; Bollaerts et al., 2007; Hanssen et al., 2007). Farmers with herds belonging to the
category with the highest risk of introducing Salmonella into the slaughterhouse are assisted
by the national governments to reduce the Salmonella load of their herd (FFSA 2006a b)

#### 3. Pathogenesis of non-typhoid Salmonella infections in pigs

#### 3.1. Porcine colonization: to invade or not to invade...

#### 3.1.1. Colonization of the Upper Gastrointestinal Tract

Transmission of *Salmonella* between pigs is thought to occur mainly via the faecal-oral route. Depending on the inoculation dose, oral experimental infection of pigs with *Salmonella* Typhimurium may result in clinical signs and faecal excretion of high numbers of bacteria (Loynachan et al., 2005; Boyen et al., 2007a). Some studies showed that the upper respiratory

198	tract and lungs may be a portal of entry as well (Fedorka-Cray et al., 1995; Proux et al., 2001)
199	and in recent reports, it was found that airborne Salmonella Typhimurium transmission in
200	weaned pigs over short distances is possible, but may be serotype-dependent (Oliveira et al.,
201	2006;2007). The pathogenesis of respiratory tract infections with Salmonella have, however,
202	not been studied in detail and therefore, this review will focus on the oral infection route.
203	Porcine epithelial beta-defensin 1 is expressed in the dorsal tongue at antimicrobial
204	concentrations and may contribute to the antimicrobial barrier properties of the dorsal tongue
205	and oral epithelium (Shi et al., 1999). Salmonellae that overcome this barrier may colonize
206	the tonsils. The palatine tonsils are often heavily infected in pigs and should, therefore, not be
207	underestimated as a source of Salmonella contamination during slaughter (Wood et al., 1989;
208	Kühnel and Blaha, 2004). During ingestion, Salmonella enters the tonsils in the soft palate
209	and persists in the tonsillar crypts (Fedorka-Cray et al., 1995; Horter et al., 2003).
210	Surprisingly, no detailed information has been gathered on how Salmonella interacts with and
211	persists in the porcine tonsillar tissue, although some observations mention persistence of
212	Salmonella on the superficial epithelium of the tonsillar crypts (Horter et al., 2003). The
213	virulence factors used by Salmonella Typhimurium to colonize the tonsillar epithelium,
214	probably without active invasion of tonsilar cells, are currently unknown. Indeed, a non-
215	invasive strain was perfectly capable of colonizing the tonsils (Boyen et al., 2006c, Figure 1).
216	The mode of colonization of the tonsils may therefore be much different than the mechanism
217	of colonization of the intestine.
218	Following ingestion, Salmonella must survive the low pH of the stomach. It has been
219	shown that salmonellae can adapt to and survive in acidic environments up to pH 3 by
220	producing acid shock proteins (Audia et al., 2001; Smith, 2003; Berk et al., 2005). The non-
221	glandular region and the cardiac gland zone of the porcine stomach have a pH range between
222	5 and 7 (Höller, 1970). Nevertheless, since the pH of the fundus and pylorus of the porcine

stomach in normal conditions decreases to pH 2 or even lower, many bacteria will be killed. When the pigs are fed a coarsely ground meal, this will result in a slow emptying of the stomach and consequently a longer stay in the acidic environment, reducing the number of surviving bacteria (Mikkelsen et al., 2004). In addition, it has been determined that the lethal effects of the porcine stomach contents are pH-dependent but that low pH is not the sole killing mechanism (Bearson et al., 2006).

#### 3.1.2. Colonization of the Lower Gastrointestinal Tract

Bacteria that survive passage through the stomach, travel to the small intestine where they encounter other antibacterial factors including bile salts, lysozyme and defensins. Even though *Salmonella* Typhimurium can be highly resistant against the direct antibacterial effects of bile salts (van Velkinburgh and Gunn, 1999), these salts repress the invasion of *Salmonella* in epithelial cells, possibly by decreasing virulence gene expression (Prouty and Gunn, 2000). Since high concentrations of bile salts are present in the upper part of the small intestine, this might explain why *Salmonella* preferentially colonizes the ileum, caecum and colon. Recently, it was shown that at least two types of defensins are present in the porcine small intestine, but their role in the pathogenesis of *Salmonella* Typhimurium infections in pigs is still unclear (Veldhuizen et al., 2007).

In the distal parts of the intestine, adherence to the intestinal mucosa is generally accepted as the first step in the pathogenesis of *Salmonella* infections in pigs. Although multiple putative adhesins have been described for *Salmonella* Typhimurium, the type 1 fimbriae are the only ones which have been shown to contribute to the attachment to porcine enterocytes and subsequently the colonization of the intestinal tract (Althouse et al., 2003). In a recent signature-tagged mutagenesis assay, *Salmonella* atypical fimbriae (*saf*), located on *Salmonella* Pathogenicity Island 6 (SPI-6), were shown to play a role in porcine gut

248	colonization, even though no statistically significant reduction was seen in the magnitude or
249	duration of faecal excretion of a safA mutant (Carnell et al., 2007).
250	Following adhesion, Salmonella invades the intestinal epithelium. It has been shown that
251	Salmonella can invade porcine absorptive enterocytes, M-cells and even goblet cells
252	(Schauser et al., 2004). Salmonella Typhimurium is found within the porcine enterocytes and
253	mesenteric lymph nodes at 2 hours after oral inoculation (Reed et al., 1986). Intracellular
254	bacteria were morphologically intact, and they were both free in the cytoplasm and membrane
255	bound. Increased epithelial cell loss has been observed during infection, as a result of caspase
256	3 dependent and independent programmed cell death in the proximal region of the jejunum
257	(Schauser et al., 2005).
258	Recently, it has been shown that the virulence genes encoded in the Salmonella
259	Pathogenicity Island 1 (SPI-1) mediate this invasion step and that these genes are crucial for
260	the colonization of the gut and GALT (Boyen et al., 2006c, Brumme et al., 2007; Figure 1).,
261	Using signature tagged mutagenesis, also several other virulence genes, including SPI-2
262	associated genes, have been identified as being important for the short term colonization of
263	the epithelium of the porcine gut (Carnell et al., 2007). An overview of all described virulence
264	genes playing a role in the pathogenesis of Salmonella infections in pigs is given in Table 2.
265	The rapid growth of Salmonella Typhimurium in the porcine gut and subsequent induction
266	of pro-inflammatory responses may explain why pigs in most cases confine Salmonella
267	Typhimurium infection to the intestines, whereas slow replication of Salmonella Choleraesuis
268	may enable it to evade host immunity and subsequently spread beyond the intestinal
269	boundaries (Paulin et al., 2007).
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#### 3.2. The Mechanism of Salmonella Induced Diarrhoea

273	Studies regarding the mechanisms involved in Salmonella Typhimurium induced
274	diarrhoea were mainly done in calf and mouse models (Tükel et al., 2006). Information on
275	this topic in pigs is much more scarce.
276	When Salmonellae invade the intestinal epithelium, a phenomenon mediated by the SPI-1
277	type three secretion system (T3SS), the production of several cytokines, is induced in the
278	porcine gut (Splichal et al., 2002; Cho and Chae, 2003; Uthe et al., 2007; Volf et al., 2007).
279	IL-8 is the most extensively studied, and for Salmonella Typhimurium induced diarrhea,
280	probably the most important of these cytokines. Infection of porcine intestinal epithelial cells
281	(Skjolaas et al., 2006; Volf, 2007) and porcine macrophages (Boyen et al., 2006a; Volf, 2007)
282	with Salmonella Typhimurium increases IL-8 secretion by these cells. IL-8 is released from
283	the basolateral aspect of infected epithelial cells and plays an important role in the initial
284	movement of neutrophils (PMN) from the circulation into the subepithelial region
285	(McCormick et al., 1995). The transepithelial migration of PMN into the lumen of the gut is
286	mediated by the SPI-1 effector SipA. In human cell lines, the SipA protein induces the apical
287	secretion of the pathogen elicited epithelial chemo-attractant (PEEC; Lee et al., 2000; Wall et
288	al., 2007), which was later identified as the key regulator of mucosal inflammation, hepoxilin
289	A <sub>3</sub> (Mrsny et al., 2004). Recently, it has been shown that the T3SS of SPI-1 and the SPI-1
290	effector SipA are crucial in the recruitment of PMN to the porcine gut (Boyen et al., 2006c).
291	In addition to the SPI-1 induced PMN influx, also other Salmonella-induced mechanisms
292	leading to enteritis and/or diarrhoea have been described, although they are not yet confirmed
293	in pig models. It has been shown that Salmonella can modulate the chloride secretion,
294	contributing to the development of diarrhoea (Eckmann et al., 1997; Norris et al., 1998;
295	Marcus et al., 2001; Zhou et al., 2001; Deleu et al., 2006). The SPI-1 effector SipB mediates
296	macrophage death in the intestine by caspase-1 activation, causing the release of IL-1beta and
297	IL-18, contributing to the inflammatory response (Hersh et al., 1999). Finally, the function of

SopA and SopD is not fully understood, but both effectors also contribute to enteritis in a bovine intestinal loop model (Zhang et al., 2002; Bakowski et al., 2007).

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The tools available for Salmonella to induce diarrhoea are overwhelming. Keeping this in mind, it may seem rather peculiar that most of the Salmonella Typhimurium infections in pigs are subclinical and asymptomatic. Apart from factors such as the infection pressure, the age and immunological status of the host, again Salmonella SPI-1 effectors may play a role. At least 3 SPI-1 effector proteins have been described that are able to downregulate the transcription nuclear factor kappaB (NF-κB) and, subsequently, the host's inflammatory responses: AvrA, a cysteine protease which inhibits pro-inflammatory cytokine production (Collier-Hyams et al., 2002; Ye et al., 2007); SspH1, a member of the family of T3SS effector proteins that share leucine-rich repeat motifs and are called Salmonella Translocated Effectors (STE's; Miao et al., 1999; Haraga and Miller, 2006); and another STE, SptP, a protein reversing the SPI-1 effects concerning invasion (Haraga and Miller, 2003). Although these genes were first considered anti-virulence proteins, the lack of inflammatory response may help Salmonella to "sneak in" unnoticed. It has been shown that NF-κB-dependent gene expression is altered in mesenteric lymph nodes of pigs inoculated with Salmonella Typhimurium (Wang et al., 2007). Porcine GeneChip analysis and quantitative polymerase chain reaction analyses revealed transcriptional induction of NFkB target genes at 24 hours post inoculation and suppression of the NFkB pathway from 24 to 48 hours post inoculation, suggesting that the rapid, but transient induction of NFkB pathways may allow the bacteria to enhance their survival chances (Wang et al., 2007).

The PMN in the gut belong to the first line of defense against a *Salmonella* infection. Inefficient uptake of *Salmonella* by PMN may provide an opportunity for the pathogen to colonize and/or replicate to levels that facilitate establishment of a carrier state or clinical infection in pigs (Stabel et al., 2002). Influx of PMN, however is a double-edged sword. On

the one hand, the presence of high numbers of neutrophils in the porcine gut enable	s the nost
to overcome a Salmonella infection (Foster et al., 2003,2005). On the other hand, the	e damage
induced by activated neutrophils is considered the main cause of the gut pathology of	listinctive
for Salmonella infections (Tükel et al., 2006).	

#### 3.3. Systemic Spread: Do Macrophages Matter?

The systemic part of a <i>Salmonella</i> Typhimurium infection in pigs is not well-documented.
It is generally accepted that Salmonella can spread throughout an organism using the blood
stream or the lymphatic fluids and infect internal organs, although this has not yet been
studied in swine. The colonization of the mesenteric lymph nodes, spleen and liver can result
in prominent systemic and local immune responses (Dlabac et al., 1997). Macrophages are the
cells of interest for host-restricted or -adapted Salmonella serotypes to disseminate to internal
organs. The bacteria replicate rapidly intracellularly and cause the systemic phase of the
infection, while interfering with the antibacterial mechanisms of the macrophages and
inducing cell death (Waterman and Holden, 2003; Hueffer and Galan, 2004). The porcine
immune system, however, differs in many aspects from that of other mammals (Scharek and
Tedin, 2007). In pigs, sporadic Salmonella Typhimurium bacteria, present in liver and spleen
shortly after experimental inoculation, do not seem to replicate and are even cleared from
these organs a few days after inoculation (Boyen et al., 2007a). At this time, the bacteria are
still found in the gut and gut-associated lymph nodes. Here, macrophages can be important
players when it comes to long term persistence.
Salmonella Pathogenicity Island 2 (SPI-2) is a prerequisite for Salmonella Typhimurium
to survive in murine macrophages and for systemic spread in mice (Waterman and Holden,
2003). Brumme et al. (2007) showed that a SPI-2 deletion mutant strain was impaired in
causing disease symptoms in pigs, but this deletion did not result in a significantly reduced
colonization rate. Similar results were obtained by our research group (Boyen et al., 2007b).
Porcine monocytes and PMN respond in vitro to Salmonella Typhimurium with
phagocytosis, oxidative burst and to some extent intracellular killing (Riber and Lind, 1999;
Donné et al., 2005). Monocytes obtained from different pigs differed markedly in their

reactive oxygen species (ROS) production and in their ability to kill the bacteria. Interestingly, high ROS production did not coincide with increased intracellular killing. No reactive nitrogen intermediates (RNI) production was detected by porcine PBM after stimulation with *Salmonella* Typhimurium or LPS (Donné et al., 2005). This is in agreement with other studies (Pampusch et al., 1998; Akunda et al., 2001) that suggested that NO synthase (iNOS) is not inducible in porcine immune cells with little or no upregulation following stimulation. Therefore, RNI production by iNOS does not appear to be an important component of the innate immune response to control intracellular *Salmonella* populations in pigs.

Both early and delayed cytotoxicity have been reported in porcine alveolar macrophages, but only the early cytotoxicity was SPI-1 dependent (Boyen et al., 2006a). It has also been shown that apoptosis-related genes are down-regulated in the mesenteric lymph nodes of *Salmonella* Typhimurium inoculated pigs at an early stage of infection, indicating that it might interfere with cell death signalling in pigs (Wang et al., 2007). The biological significance of *Salmonella* induced cell death in the pathogenesis of *Salmonella* infections in pigs is not yet clear.

#### 3.4. Persistent Salmonella Typhimurium Infections in Pigs

Infections of pigs with *Salmonella* Typhimurium may result in long-term asymptomatic carriage of these organisms (Wood et al., 1991). Since this carrier state in pigs is difficult to detect in live animals, either by bacteriological or serological methods (Baggesen and Wegener, 1993; Nollet et al., 2005), these pigs can bias monitoring programmes. Stress-induced excretion of *Salmonella* Typhimurium by carrier pigs transported to the slaughterhouse may cause contamination of shipping equipment and holding areas, resulting

378	in preslaughter transmission of Salmonella to non-infected pigs (Isaacson et al., 1999; Larsen
379	et al., 2003; Boughton et al., 2007). Although the mechanism of this stress-induced excretion
380	is not known, there are some indications that catecholamines may play a role. It has been
381	shown that Salmonella Typhimurium can "sense" catecholamines and as a result increase its
382	growth rate (Rahman et al., 2000; Williams et al., 2006; Methner et al., 2007).
383	Very few researchers have made an attempt to unravel the mechanism of the concealed
384	but prolonged infection in carrier pigs (Boyen et al., 2006b; Wang et al., 2007). The CS54
385	Island has been characterized as an important locus for intestinal colonization and prolonged
386	shedding in mice (Kingsley et al., 2000; Kingsley et al., 2003). The most important
387	component of this island is ShdA, an outer membrane protein of the autotransporter family,
388	which is expressed solely in the intestine. It has been shown, however, that a Salmonella
389	Typhimurium shdA deletion mutant is not significantly impaired in persistence in pigs (Boyen
390	et al., 2006b).
391	Recent insights in diverse areas of the pathogenesis, primarily described in mice, can also
392	give us a clue which mechanisms might play a role in the persistence of Salmonella in pigs.
393	The latest findings are changing our classical view of Salmonella as a fast growing
394	intracellular pathogen and devastating bacterium. Research in the mouse model suggests that
395	Salmonella may reduce its own intracellular growth rate (Cano et al., 2001; Jantsch et al
396	2003; Sheppard et al., 2003; Monack et al., 2004) and may actively limit its impact on the
397	infected tissues (Collier-Hyams et al., 2002, Haraga and Miller, 2003), as if it was a
398	commensal (Tierrez and Garcia-del Portillo, 2005). It was found recently that Salmonella
399	Typhimurium evades strong host responses by downregulating the local inflammatory
400	response in pigs (Niewold et al., 2007; Wang, 2007).
401	In addition, Salmonella is able to interfere with the antigen presentation and the
402	development of acquired immunity in mice (Mitchell et al., 2004; Qimron et al., 2004)

Cheminay et al., 2005, Vandervelden et al., 2005; Alaniz et al., 2006; Luu et al., 2006). Also in pigs, it has been suggested that subversion of the dendritic cell function by *Salmonella* Typhimurium can prevent efficient stimulation of T-cell proliferation (Wang et al., 2007). Alternatively, it has been shown in mice that *Salmonella* Typhimurium does not replicate or cause cytotoxicity in fibroblasts, but remains in a persistent state (Martinez-Moya et al., 1998). Evidence for *in vivo* persistence in fibroblasts has been produced in mice (Garcia-del Portillo, 2006). Therefore, fibroblasts should not be neglected in the search for a mechanistic explanation for persistent infections in pigs. Even though the exact contribution of these mechanisms to the pathogenesis of the carrier state in pigs is not clear and that the porcine immune system differs in many aspects from that of mice (Scharek and Tedin, 2007), these findings in mice may shed a new light on the mechanism of persistence in pigs in the future.

#### 4. Interactions between Salmonella and other microbial agents

Various bacterial (*Mycoplasma hyopneumoniae*, *Actinobacillus pleuropneumoniae*) and viral infections (hog cholera virus, porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus (PRRSV), Aujeszky's disease virus) can result in immunodeficiency in pigs (Segales et al., 2004). Furthermore, some of these and also other swine pathogens (porcine parvovirus, swine influenza virus, African swine fever virus) are able to replicate in different immune cells and impair their function (Roth, 1999). These infections may lead to easier colonization by *Salmonella*, increased shedding or even higher mortality rates in pigs. For example, *in utero* infection with PRRSV inhibits phagocytosis of *Salmonella* in blood monocytes as well as the oxidative burst capacity of alveolar macrophages (Riber et al., 2004) and both pathogens may work synergistically to produce disease or persistence (Wills et al., 2000). The emergence of PRRSV in 1987 has been suggested to be a possible reason for the surge of *Salmonella* 

Choleraesuis infections in pigs in the USA the last few years (Chiu et al., 2004). PRRSV
seropositivity during the fattening period also indicated an increased hazard for
seroconversion for Salmonella (Beloeil et al., 2007).
Exposure to rumen protozoa led to enhancement of pathogenicity of Salmonella in a
bovine infection model (Rasmussen et al., 2005). There are no reports describing enhanced
virulence of Salmonella after exposure to other microbial agents in a porcine infection model.
Interactions with intestinal nematodes may alter the excretion of Salmonella Typhimurium
(Steenhard et al., 2002) or the development of enteritis symptoms (Arechavaleta et al., 1998).
A dose dependency of the interaction was suggested. The relatively high number of parasites
necessary to influence the Salmonella infection suggests that these common pig helminths
generally do not influence the course of concurrent Salmonella Typhimurium infections under
natural conditions (Steenhard et al., 2006). In contrast, the counts of Salmonella Typhimurium
in the feces and in the cecal contents of piglets infected with both Salmonella Typhimurium
and Isospora suis were significantly lower than in those infected with Salmonella
Typhimurium alone (Baba and Gafaar, 1985). No mechanistic model was proposed by the
authors to explain this phenomenon, however, the (subclinical) intestinal inflammation
elicited by Isospora suis may aid in the limitation of Salmonella colonization (Foster et al.,
2003).

#### 5. Genetic resistance to Salmonella in swine

Although genetic-linked variance in immune responses is well known to occur in large domestic mammals such as pigs, specific resistance to *Salmonella* is less characterized (Wigley, 2004). The influence of swine major histocompatibility complex genes (SLA) on phagocytic and bactericidal activities of peripheral blood monocytes against *Salmonella* 

453	Typhimurium was measured in vitro using cultured cells (Lacey et al., 1989). Uptake and
454	killing of Salmonella Typhimurium was highest in homozygous aa and cc haplotypes at 4
455	weeks and pigs with the c x d recombinant haplotype had highest uptake and killing of
456	Salmonella Typhimurium at 8 weeks (Lacey et al., 1989).
457	The natural resistance-associated macrophage protein (SLC11a1; also called NRAMP1)
458	has been reported to play a role in controlling the growth of several intracellular pathogens,
459	including Salmonella (Roy and Malo, 2002). NRAMP1 has been identified and cloned in a
460	number of domestic mammals including pigs (Sun et al., 1998; Zhang et al., 2000). In pigs
461	NRAMP1 is strongly expressed on macrophages and neutrophils following stimulation with
462	LPS (Zhang et al., 2000), and is upregulated significantly in the mesenteric lymph nodes of
463	pigs inoculated with Salmonella Typhimurium (Uthe et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2007).
464	A reference population of pigs bred to study resistance to Salmonella Choleraesuis
465	infection indicated that a number of inherited immunological traits influence resistance to
466	salmonellosis (Van Diemen et al., 2002). Neutrophils from the resistant animals showed
467	increased phagocytic and antimicrobial activity and T-lymphocytes increased mitogen-
468	induced proliferation, though no genes associated with this resistance were described. It
469	would be presumptuous, however, to extrapolate these findings to non-typhoid Salmonella
470	serotypes.
471	Since the actual genes for resistance against Salmonella infections are not identified yet
472	and since there are no pig lines that are less sensitive to non-typhoid Salmonella infections, it
473	is considered practically impossible to select for resistance in a breeding scheme (Velander et
474	al., 2007).
477	

475

#### 6. Designing control measures based on the Pathogenesis

#### 6.1.Organic acids

The last few years, there is a widespread interest in "natural methods" to inhibit the spread of pathogenic bacteria in farm animals. Commercial preparations consisting of different kinds of organic acids not only appear to improve feed conversion and growth of animals, but also pathogen control has been reported, especially in poultry (Van Immerseel et al., 2004a,b,2006) The antibacterial effect of these products depends on the type of organic acid, the bacterial species, the used concentration and the physical form through which it is administered to the animals. The composition of the currently used products is mostly empirically determined.

Recent research suggests that *Salmonella* Typhimurium mainly uses two distinct sites and mechanisms for colonization of pigs, namely the tonsils on the one hand and the intestine and associated lymph nodes on the other hand (Boyen et al., 2006c; Huang et al., 2007). In order to combat *Salmonella* infections in pigs, measures that interfere with both tonsillar and intestinal colonization will probably yield the best results. Since the mechanisms of colonization of these important sites seem to be very different, the control measures should be designed accordingly.

#### **6.1.1.Upper Gastrointestinal Tract**

Contaminated feed is a well-known source for *Salmonella* introduction to the farm (Davies et al., 2004; Osterberg et al., 2006). The original concept of incorporating acids into the feed of poultry was based on the notion that the acids would decontaminate the feed itself and prevent *Salmonella* uptake (Van Immerseel et al., 2006). Even though no thorough

research has been conducted concerning the control of a *Salmonella* infection at the tonsillar level, it seems likely that a similar effect could be achieved in the oral cavity. The type of acid and the concentration used will be very important. (Van Immerseel et al., 2006). The administration of acidified drinking water in pig farms has been shown to lower the prevalence of serologically positive pigs (van der Wolf et al., 2001). However, no experimental assays have been performed using acidified drinking water, nor has the effect on the colonization of the different organs been investigated. On the other hand, acid adaptation and acid tolerance genes have been described in *Salmonella* Typhimurium (Smith et al., 2003; Berk et al., 2005). Therefore, acidification of drinking water may pre-condition *Salmonella* to survival in acid conditions- possibly reducing the effectiveness of the antibacterial barrier of the stomach.

#### **6.1.2.Lower Gastrointestinal Tract**

Orally administered organic acids are rapidly taken up by epithelial cells along the alimentary tract, thereby disappearing in the highly relevant lower parts of the gastro-intestinal tract. Therefore, researchers have attempted to transport the organic acids further down in the gastrointestinal tract by micro-encapsulation, which should prevent absorption of the acids in the upper tract (Van Immerseel et al., 2006). Certain short- and medium-chain fatty acids have been shown to decrease *Salmonella* invasion in enterocytes through the downregulation of SPI-1 encoded genes (Van Immerseel et al., 2004a; Gantois et al., 2006). The concentrations of the acids necessary for this effect are below those necessary to exert a direct antimicrobial effect (Gantois et al., 2006; Van Immerseel et al., 2004a). Considering the importance of invasion in the colonization of the porcine gut, one could expect that any measure that interferes with this invasion step will decrease the bacterial load in the gut. Indeed, using coated butyric acid, we were able to lower intestinal colonization and bacterial

shedding in pigs (unpublished results) as has also been described in poultry (Van Immerseel et al., 2006).

#### 6.2. Vaccination

Vaccination against zoonotic pathogens to prevent carriage is considered much more difficult than vaccination to prevent disease. It requires not only the induction of a local immune response to prevent mucosal colonization, it should also decrease or eliminate the presence of the bacteria at the farm-level to prevent cross-contamination at the slaughterhouse (Meeusen et al., 2007).

At present, live vaccine strains are considered to offer a better protection against *Salmonella* infections compared to inactivated vaccines, probably due to the more pronounced cellular immune response and the induction of mucosal IgA production (Haesebrouck et al., 2004; Meeusen et al., 2007). Bacterial attenuated vaccine strains can be divided in three types: 1) strains, which are attenuated without the attenuation being localised or characterised, 2) strains with mutations in genes that are important for the bacterial metabolism, for example auxotrophic mutant strains, 3) strains in which specific virulence genes were removed. The advantage of the latter group is that the vaccine strains are very well characterised and that reversion to the wild-type phenotype is extremely unlikely. Strains that lack one or more virulence genes important for clinical salmonellosis or for the induction of persistent infections in pigs might represent promising candidates for future vaccine development. It has been suggested that virulence-gene deleted vaccines may be less immunogenic than metabolic-gene deleted vaccines (Meeusen et al., 2007). Nevertheless, it has been shown in pigs that protection against *Salmonella* Typhimurium was not dependent on T3SS secreted proteins of SPI-1 (Carnell et al., 2007).

Recent research has identified various virulence genes, playing a role in different stages of the pathogenesis of *Salmonella* Typhimurium infections in pigs. These findings may contribute to the development of more efficient and safer vaccines. Such a vaccine should be able to: (1) prevent clinical symptoms, (2) reduce shedding by infected pigs and hence spreading to other pigs, (3) increase the threshold for infection of susceptible pigs and (4) induce a humoral response that is distinguishable of that induced during infection, not to interfere with monitoring programmes (Haesebrouck et al., 2004; Selke et al., 2007).

#### 7. Concluding Remarks

As stated above, it has been shown that *Salmonella* is able to interfere with the antigen presentation and the development of an immunological response in mice (Mitchell et al., 2004; Qimron et al., 2004). In practice, serologically negative swine herds are sometimes found to still produce pigs that are bacteriologically positive in the gut and associated lymph nodes at slaughter (Nollet et al., 2005). It has been suggested that these pigs were recently infected, so that the serological response was not fully developed at the time of sampling. However, if some *Salmonella* strains are truly able to actively decrease the immunological response, the current monitoring programmes, which usually are based on serology, may show inadequate in these cases. It is clear that more research in this area is needed.

Research on the pathogenesis of *Salmonella* infections in food producing animals remains an interesting and challenging topic. For relevant pathogenesis research, both host species and appropriate *Salmonella* strains should be chosen with care. Recent studies carried out in pigs improved our knowledge on mechanisms used by *Salmonella* Typhimurium to colonize the intestinal tract. On the other hand, the colonization of the tonsils remains largely unknown and merits further attention.

576	Presently acquired and future insights in the pathogenesis of Salmonella Typhimurium
577	infections in pigs may aid in the fine-tuning of current control programmes and in developing
578	more efficient and safer vaccines.

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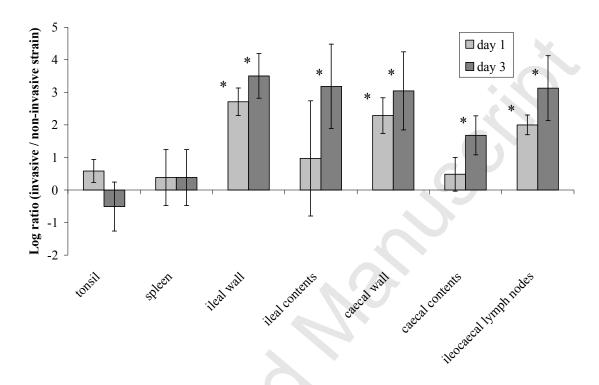
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Figure 1



Recovery of bacteria from various organs of piglets at days 1 and 3 after inoculation with an equal mixture of an invasive field strain of *Salmonella* Typhimurium and an isogenic non-invasive mutant strain ( $\Delta sipB$ ). The log value of the ratio of the number of cfu/g sample of the invasive and non-invasive strain is given as the mean  $\pm$  standard deviation. An asterisk indicates that the output ratio was significantly different (p < 0.05) from that present in the inoculum (adapted from Boyen et al., 2006c).

**Table 1.** Salmonella isolated from pork in various countries<sup>a</sup>

				All serotypes		Salmonella Typhimurium
Country	Year	Sampling	Sample	N	%Pos	%Pos
USA	1999	Post-harvest	raw meat	209	3.3	ND
Great Britain	1999	harvest	carcasses	2509	5.3	2.1
Vietnam	2000	Post-harvest	raw meat	136	69.9	ND
Mexico	2001	Post-harvest	raw meat	339	58.1	5.1
Belgium	2004	harvest	raw meat	374	12.3	4.0
Denmark	2004	harvest	carcasses	34038	0.8	0.3
Finland	2004	harvest	carcasses	6576	0	-
Germany	2004	harvest	raw meat	4744	0.5	0.3
Hungary	2004	harvest	raw meat	8257	1.3	0.4
Italy	2004	harvest	raw meat	256	4.3	1.2
Italy	2004	harvest	carcasses	1096	3.6	0.9
Latvia	2004	harvest	raw meat	185	1.1	-
Malta	2004	harvest	raw meat	400	32.8	<del>-</del>
Poland	2004	harvest	raw meat	895	0.2	-
Portugal	2004	harvest	raw meat	256	15.2	<del>-</del>
Spain	2004	harvest	raw meat	147	10.2	<del>-</del>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>a</sup> Data are from references Zhao et al., 2001; EFSA, 2005; Davies et al., 2004; Phan et al., 2005; Zaidi et al., 2006.

**Table 2.** Overview of Salmonella virulence genes with reported role in Salmonella

Typhimurium pathogenesis in pigs

Virulence gene	Role in pathogenesis	References
FimA	Adhesion to intestinal epithelial cells	Althouse et al., 2003
SafA	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
SPI-1	Invasion in intestinal epithelial cells	Boyen et al., 2006c; Brumme et
	and development of enteritis	al., 2007; Carnell et al., 2007
SPI-2	Attenuated for causing disease and in	Brumme et al., 2007; Carnell et
	STM screening	al., 2007
SugR	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
MisL	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
MgtC	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
PipC	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
Various plasmid-associated genes	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
Various phage-associated genes	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
Various envelope/surface structures	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
Various house keeping genes	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007
Various hypothetical proteins	Attenuated in STM screening	Carnell et al., 2007