

PRESS RELEASE

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**Rural tourists know least about *E. coli* O157 – study reveals**

**Seventy percent of visitors to the countryside have never heard of *E.* *coli* O157, new findings have revealed.  And even those who are aware of the potentially deadly infection may not understand**

**how they can reduce their risk of contracting it.**

**The study by researchers from the Universities of Aberdeen and Bangor, working on the Relu project** Reducing E coli Risk in Rural Communities**revealed that 30% of those who know about *E.* *coli* O157 did not believe it posed a risk that required any response beyond their everyday hygiene and cleanliness.  However, 70% of those who had heard of *E. coli* O157 said they had acted to reduce their risk of the infection. Most described how they reduced risk by cooking meat properly, but very few gave examples of reducing risk around farm animals and in the countryside.  Over 2000 tourists, residents and famers from North Wales and the Grampian region –** which has one of the world's highest rates of the infection – took part in the survey.