Correspondence

SIR—'Observations on a seasonal increase in one laboratory in urinary infections with *Escherichia coli* resistant to two or more antibacterial drugs'. *Postgraduate Medical Journal*, 47, Sept. Suppl., p. 19.

Those who wrote for reprints of this paper may be interested to know that the increase in June and July 1970, in resistance to each of several antibacterial agents, to two or more drugs and in the proportion of urinary infections with *Esch. coli* did not occur in the following year, 1971, and was therefore a unique and not a summer seasonal event. Resistances of strains isolated from poultry carcasses (mainly broilers), which increased very sharply in the second half of 1970, falling again in 1971, are shown below.

The startling drop in resistances to furazolidone from 15% of isolates in July–December 1970, to less than 1% throughout 1971 is closely paralleled by the behaviour of 1360 human urinary infecting strains isolated here in 1971. Resistances of these to the other nitrofurans, nitrofurantoin, suddenly fell from the 1970 figures quoted in the paper (12.6% in June–August and 6.2% in the other 9 months) to 2.2% of all isolates in 1971. All this would suggest a relationship in terms of changing patterns of drug resistance between strains of *Esch. coli* from human urinary infection in one locality and strains from poultry carcasses from country-wide sources.

Esch. coli from poultry carcasses sent from all parts of the U.K. (BOCM Poultry Post-Mortem Laboratory)

	Isolates	% resistant to:		
		Oxytetra-cycline (50 µg)	Strepto-mycin (25 µg)	Furazo-lidone (100 µg)
1963–4	597	23	4	3
1969				
Jan.–June	290	14	4	< 1
July–Dec.	206	8	1.5	1
1970				
Jan.–June	127	22	5	6.5
July–Dec.	197	37	8	15
1971				
Jan.–June	132	18	NT	< 1
July–Dec.	142	18	NT	< 1

NT, Not tested.

I am indebted to Mr A. P. Laursen-Jones of the BOCM Silcock Veterinary Laboratory, Stoke Mandeville, for permission to quote these figures.

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