



Bacteriological Analysis of Artisan Cheeses Marketed in Free Fairs in the Interior of Pernambuco

Santos J.I.1; Tabosa V.S.2

1,2Graduada em Farmácia pelo Centro Universitário Tabosa de Almeida 1,2Pós-Graduada em Farmácia Hospitalar e Clínica

ABSTRACT

Introduction:The fair is considered one of the most traditional food and retail marketing sites. Among the products marketed with the greatest consumption are the cheeses that can be produced both artisan and industrial. Cheese is considered to be a frequent vehicle of foodborne pathogens and, in particular, fresh cottage cheese because they are mostly made from raw milk and are not matured. **Objective:** To analyze the bacteriological quality of artisanal cheeses marketed in the free trade fairs of the city of Caruaru-PE. **Methodology:** The samples were collected in polyethylene plastic bags and after collection, the samples were transported in an isothermal container and sent to the laboratories of Food Technology and Food Microbiology of the Centro Universitário Tabosa de Almeida. The research of total coliforms, thermotolerant and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* was performed by the multiple tubes technique and the counting of heterotrophic bacteria was by the technique of pour plate both as recommended by the Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater (APHA). **Results and Discussion:** All collected samples had total coliforms, thermotolerant and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, with heterotrophic bacteria counting above 10⁵ CFU / ml. The presence of contamination indicating bacteria in the samples analyzed may be related to contamination during processing and post processing, storage, temperature fluctuation, contaminated packaging and equipment contamination. **Conclusion:** Since the production and inadequate marketing of cheeses can have serious consequences for the population, it is concluded that the high index of contamination by feces (coliforms), organic matter (*Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) and contamination index (heterotrophic bacteria) may be related to the presence of pathogens above the values established by current legislation. Thus becoming a product of poor conditions for human consumption, requiring a greater supervision.

Keywords: Heterotrophic bacteria; Total coliforms; *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*

*Correspondence to Author:

Santos J.I.

Graduada em Farmácia pelo Centro Universitário Tabosa de Almeida

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