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Veterinarni Medicina

Microbiological quality of marketed fresh and frozen seafood caught off the Adriatic coast of Croatia

TTopic Popovic N, Benussi Skukan A, Dzidara P, Coz-Rakovac R, Strunjak-Perovic I, Kozacinski L, Jadan M, Brlek-Gorski D

Veterinarni Medicina, 55 (2010): 233-241

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Fresh and frozen seafood products (fish, shellfish, crustaceans, molluscs) in wide use in Croatia and typical of the Mediterranean diet, were examined for the presence of microbiological contamination through the winter and summer seasons. Total bacterial counts of aerobic mesophilic bacteria (AB), aerobic psychrophilic bacteria (AP), *Salmonella* spp., *Enterobacteriaceae*, *Escherichia coli*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, sulphite-reducing clostridia (SRC), *Listeria monocytogenes*, *Vibrio cholerae* and *V. parahaemolyticus* were measured. The microbiological quality of individual samples varied widely between animal

seasons regarding total counts of aerobic mesophilic and psychophilic bacteria. The poorest quality was for (both summer and winter) fish samples, where 66.6 % of fresh and frozen fish were found unacceptable by Croatian standards. The overall prevalence of *V. parahaemolyticus* was 5%. Its recovery rate was higher in fresh/frozen shellfish in both seasons than in other specimens or other storage/season conditions. Fresh crustaceans sampled in winter demonstrated significantly higher aerobic mesophilic counts than frozen ones. Unacceptable *Enterobacteriaceae* levels were obtained in 40% of the fresh fish summer samples. The results of this survey constitute an indicator of bacteriological contamination of a variety of seafood. The findings could serve as a basis for future testing of seafood, and possibly as a template for developing a regional/Mediterranean testing scheme on the microbial contamination of seafood in order to establish data with comparative epidemiological and statistical values.

Keywords:

enterobacteria; vibrios; microbiological
contamination

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