

Title Occurrence and characterization of *Aeromonas hydrophila* and *Yersinia enterocolitica* in minimally processed fresh vegetable salads

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Citation Food Control, Volume 21, Issue 4, April 2010, Pages 393-398

Keywords *Aeromonas hydrophila*; *Yersinia enterocolitica*; Ready to eat salads; SDS-PAGE

Abstract

A range of commercially available minimally processed ready to eat salads was examined for the presence of *Aeromonas* and *Yersinia*, to provide information about their occurrence and characterize them by some phenotypic criteria. The SDS-PAGE of whole-cell proteins was also applied as a taxonomic tool for the rapid and effective identification of *Aeromonas hydrophila* and *Yersinia enterocolitica* found among a number of *Aeromonas* and *Yersinia* isolates. *Aeromonas* isolates were obtained from 61.5% of the samples and more than 80% of them were characterized as *A. hydrophila*. Two isolates were classified by both phenotypic criteria and the SDS-PAGE of whole-cell proteins as *Y. enterocolitica*. These results therefore suggest the prevalence of *A. hydrophila* isolates and the low occurrence of *Y. enterocolitica* in the minimally processed salads.