Title	Isolation of shiga toxigenic Escherichia coli from raw beef in Palestine
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Abstract

Shiga toxigenic *Escherichia coli* (STEC) isolated from raw beef samples in northern Palestine during a 1-year period were characterized for virulence genes by a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay and screened for their antibiotic resistance. STEC was identified in 44 (14.7%) of 300 raw beef samples. Twelve (27.3%) of the STEC isolates were serotype O157. Nine of those were isolated during summer. The majority of STEC isolates (70.5%) harbored both stx_1 and stx_2 genes, while the others harbored either stx_1 or stx_2. High levels of resistance against different antimicrobial agents were detected. Resistance to at least three drugs was found in 55% of the isolates.