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A STUDY ON THE OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIA MICRO-ORGANISMS

IN MILK AND SOME DAIRY PRODUCTS

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LIST OF CONTENTS

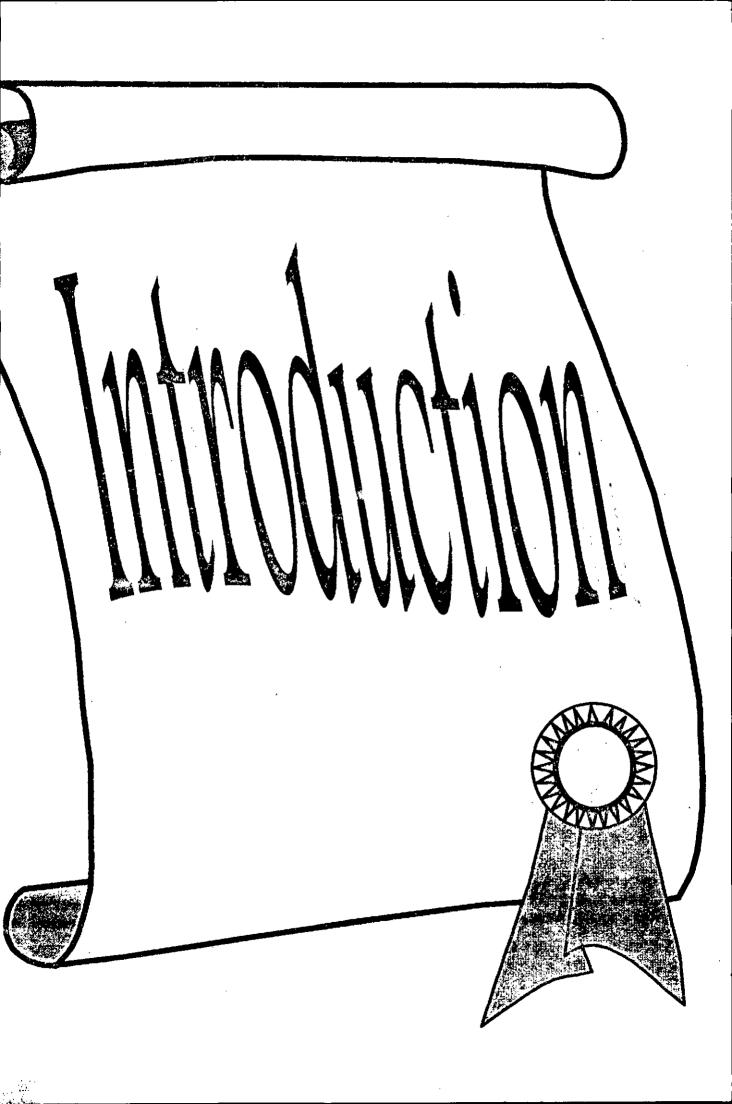
INTRODUCTION	1
REVIEW OF LITERATURE	4
1. Characters of the organism	4
2. Characters of the cultural media	5
3. Incidence of Yersinias	12
4. Survival of Yersinia enterocolitica	26
5. Public health significance of Yersinia enterocolitica	30
MATERIALS AND METHODS	35
RESULTS	55
DISCUSSION	69
CONCLUSION	79
SUMMARY	81
REFERENCES	83
ARABIC SUMMARY	

LIST OF TABLES

1.OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIAS IN RAW MILK, ICE CREAM AND
DAMIETTA CHEESE (Tab. 1)55
2.INCIDENCE OF YERSINIAS IN INDIVIDUAL MILK SAMPLES
(Tab. 2)56
3.INCIDENCE OF YERSINIAS IN BULK MILK SAMPLES (Tab. 3)
56
4.ANTIBIOTIC SENSITIVITY TEST FOR THE ISOLATED STRAIN
OF YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA (Tab. 4)57
5.INCIDENCE OF PRESUMPTIVE COLONIES LIKE-YERSINIA
MICRO ORGANISMS GROWING ON CIN AGAR (Tab. 5)58
6.SURVIVAL OF YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA IN ICE CREAM
(Tab. 6) 59
7.EFFECT OF NISIN AND STARTER ON SURVIVAL OF YERSINIA
ENTEROCOLITICA IN DAMIETTA CHEESE (Tab. 7) 60

LIST OF FIGURES

1. OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIAS IN INDIVIDUAL MILK SAMPLES (Fig. 1)61
2. OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIAS IN BULK MILK SAMPLES (Fig. 2)—61
3. OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIAS IN ICE CREAM SAMPLES (Fig. 3)62
4. OCCURRENCE OF YERSINIAS IN DAMIETTA CHEESE SAMPLES (Fig. 4)62
5. INCIDENCE OF YERSINIAS IN INDIVIDUAL MILK SAMPLES (Fig. 5)
6. INCIDENCE OF YERSINIAS IN BULK MILK SAMPLES (Fig. 6)63
7. ANTIBIOTIC SENSITIVETY TEST FOR THE ISOLATED YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA (Fig. 7)
8. INCIDENCE OF PRESUMPTIVE COLONIES LIKE YERSINIA MICRO ORGANISMS GROWING ON CIN AGAR (Fig. 8)65
9. SURVIVAL OF YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA IN ICE CREAM (Fig. 9)66
10. HYDROGEN ION CONCENTRATION CHANGES DURING SURVIVAL OF YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA IN DAMIETTA CHEESE (Fig. 10)67
11. EFFECT OF NISIN AND STARTER ON SURVIVAL OF YERSINIA ENTEROCOLITICA IN DAMIETTA CHEESE (Fig. 11)68



Introduction

Yersinia species are common environmental gram-negative, rod shaped bacteria that include eleven species, three of which are pathogenic to humans and animals.

In food hygiene, Yersinia pseudo-tuberculosis and Yersinia enterocolitica are recognized as food-borne pathogens.

Swine is the primary reservoir for pathogenic Yersinia spp. around the world and it can be isolated from environment, faeces of cattle and goats, flies and other insects (Shayengani et al., 1983). Yersinia can contaminate milk and milk products during production, preparation and processing as it can adhere and colonize the dairy processing surfaces that, come in direct contact with dairy products (Donnelly, 1990 and Pritchard et al., 1995). High temperature short time pasteurization condition of 71.8°C for 18 seconds easily kill Yersinia enterocolitica, hence its presence in pasteurized products indicates the real possibility of post pasteurization contamination will exist (Tacket et al, 1984 and Schiemann, 1989).

Several microbiological surveys of raw milk, pasteurized milk, soft cheese and ice cream (El-Gemiey, 1995; Constantiniu et al, 1998; El-Brince and Sabreen, 1998 and Halawa & Abdel-Hady, 1998) showed that, Yersinia species were present with variable percentages.

Milk and milk products have been responsible for numerous outbreaks of Yersiniosis in Canada (Kasatiya, 1976), in the United States, New York state (Anon, 1976 and Black et al, 1978), in a tri-states in the southeast (Tacket et al, 1984), in three southern states (Aulisio et al, 1982) and in the U.K. (Barret,

enterocolitica can produce a variety of clinical symptoms particularly pseudo-appendicitis, Arthritis, Erythema nodsum and septicemia which cause death (IDF, 1994). Since Yersinias can survive and grow at refrigeration temperature (Kirov et al, 1993), as well as can withstand freezing and surviving for extended periods in frozen food, even after repeated freezing and thawing (Toora et al, 1992).

Refrigeration and freezing will not a quarantine safety for milk and dairy products from these pathogenic microorganisms (Aytac & Qzbas, 1992). Moreover, El-Brince and Sabreen, (1998) showed that, Yersinia enterocolitica survived for 26 days in Yoghurt stored at 4°C, declined in numbers in ice cream stored at -18°C and remained over a period of weeks in Colby like cheese.

Several investigators, (Abee et al, 1993; Aman & Ahmed, 1997 and Aman et al, 1998) studied the effect of nisin, a bacteriocin produced by lactococcus lactis which is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) in the USA and highly active against Bacillus, Clostridium, Staphylococcus aureus and Listeria monocytogenes. Unfortunately, these previous studies did not fully address about the effect of nisin on Yersinia enterocolitica.

Therefore, the aim of the present study was to determine the incidence of *Yersinia* species in milk, Damietta cheese and ice cream and to study the usefulness of nisin for control the growth of *Yersinia enterocolitica* in cheese according to the following scheme:

- 1) Isolation of presumptive Yersinia from milk,

 Damietta cheese and ice cream.
- 2) Confirmation of the isolated *Yersinia spp.* by using the morphological and biochemical tests.
- 3) Testing the sensitivity of the well confirmed Yersinia enterocolitica strain for antibiotics using antibiotic discs
- 4) Study the effect of freezing on *Yersinia* enterocolitica in the laboratory-manufactured ice cream.
- 5) Study the effect of nisin on the survival characteristic of *Yersinia enterocolitica* in the laboratory manufactured white soft cheese.