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Cairo University Faculty of Veterinary Medicine Department of Food Hygiene and Control



Improving the Hygienic Quality of Soft Cheese Ripened in Brine (Domiati Cheese) Produced in Some Traditional Low Technology Dairy Plants

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(Hygiene and Control of Milk and its products)

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Title of the thesis: Improving the Hygienic Quality of Soft Cheese Ripened in Brine (Domiati Cheese) Produced in

Some Traditional Low Technology Dairy Plants

ABSTRACT

To improve the hygienic quality of ripened Domiati cheese produced in some traditional low technology dairy plants our study was divided into two parts. The first part investigated the impact of raw materials and processing techniques on the microbiological quality of Egyptian Domiati cheese. In which, three hundred random composite samples were collected from three traditional factories at Fayoum Governorate, Egypt. Collected samples represented twenty-five each of: raw milk, table salt, calf rennet, microbial rennet, water, environmental air, whey, fresh cheese, ripened cheese & swabs from: worker's hands; cheese molds & utensils and tanks. All samples were examined microbiologically for Standard Plate Count (SPC), coliforms count, *Staphylococcus aureus* (*S. aureus*) count, total yeast & mould count, presence of *E. coli*, salmonellae and *Listeria monocytogenes* (*L. monocytogenes*). Regardless the quality of used raw materials and the processing techniques, ripening period seemed to have significant effect on improving the quality of the final product through the prevailed adverse conditions. The diverse of microorganisms and their counts in raw materials, food handlers and food contact surfaces, besides, the processing conditions have impact on the quality and safety of the product.

The second part studied the effect of some improved processing techniques on the microbiological and sensory quality of Domiati cheese. Different trials were made to overcome the common defects that usually occur, as well as to improve the microbiological quality of the produced cheese without affecting the final product organoleptic quality. Trials include use of raw-, pasteurized- and cultured pasteurized milk for cheese making, accompanied with or without sanitizing of equipment with 0.25% hydrogen peroxide, or adding 0.1% potassium sorbate as a preservative to milk. 3 trials were made for different treatments. Samples from fresh and ripened produced cheese from different treatments were examined microbiologically and organoleptically. Pasteurization of raw milk positively affected the microbiological quality, but negatively affected the organoleptic parameters of cheese. The use of cultured pasteurized milk improved both the microbiological and sensory parameters of ripened final product. Sanitizing of food contact surfaces with hydrogen peroxide improved the microbiological quality of the produced cheese. However, it negatively affects the overall acceptability of the organoleptic parameters. Addition of potassium sorbate 0.1% found to be effective in controlling the microbial growth with no effect on final product sensory parameters. Domiati cheese makers are recommended to use cultured pasteurized milk with addition of potassium sorbate, as they not only had a nearly similar sensory parameters to that arise from raw milk cheese but also more safer to the consumer. Recommendations were given to Domiati cheese manufacturers to save them from economic losses, as well as, to safeguard the consumer's health through production of high quality and safe products.

Key words: Domiati cheese, raw milk, pasteurized milk, cultured pasteurized milk, potassium sorbate and hydrogen peroxide, ripening period.

Dediction

To my mother's soul, I ask the greatest Allah to have mercy upon her and have her in paradise

To my lovely husband, Ahmed, for his patience, love and friendship

To my lovely daughter, princess Talia

To my great and kind father

To my sisters Nourhan and Mayada and to my brother

Mohamed

And Also to my friends

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CHAPTER (1)

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Cheese ripened under brine or white-brined cheese have been produced in border countries of the Mediterranean Sea and some Balkan countries. Brined cheese represent 5% of the total production of cheese in the world. These cheese have white color, salty, acidic, and sometimes a piquant taste with no rind, no gas holes, and a close texture (Fuquay et al., 2011 and McSweeney et al., 2017).

White-brined cheese is traditionally consumed either fresh or after ripening in a brined solution (5–20% NaCl) at room temperature. Feta, Domiati, Halloumi, and Beyaz peynir are well-known varieties in this group of cheese (Fox et al., 2004 and Al-Holy et al., 2012).

Domiati cheese is the most popular Egyptian cheese variety which accounts for ~75% of the total white soft cheese production. It can be consumed either fresh or after ripening (2-4 months). Ripening in brine can take place either at room temperature (Istamboli cheese) or at about 10 °C (Baramili cheese) (Fuquay et al., 2011 and Alnemr et al., 2016).

Domiati cheese has a very high nutritive value as they contain easily absorbed, decomposed proteins, fats (high concentration of short and medium chain fatty acids); lactose, calcium, phosphorus, minerals and some B group vitamins; which may facilitate multiplication and proliferation of microbial load in cheese, especially traditionally produced Domiati cheese made from raw milk (**Touch & Deeth, 2009 and Blažić** *et al.*, **2017**).

Traditionally, Domiati cheese is made from raw milk of either buffalo's or cow's milk or mixture of them, with the addition of (10 -15%) salt directly to cheese milk before renneting, after salting, liquid animal rennet is added to have the coagulum in 2.5 - 3 hours, the curd is scooped into wooden molds coated with cheesecloth; then pressed lightly before being cut into blocks. The filtrated salty whey is collected for pickling the