

IMPORTANCE OF ADEQUATE HAND HYGIENE OF FOOD HANDLERS IN SNAILS MEAT PROCESSING

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Abstract

The hand hygiene of the food handlers is a very important element in ensuring the microbiological safety of food. There are many cases of food poisoning in the world, in which microorganisms - the causes of poisoning in food - come through workers who manipulate with food. The package of frozen snail's meat in the shells is done completely manually.

In the period 2014 - 2017 were taken swabs from the hands of workers who have direct contact with snail's meat and tested for the presence of *Enterobacteriaceae* and *Staphylococcus aureus*. 1370 samples were analyzed. For the analysis is used the finished selective substrate of the 3M manufacturer, and after the incubation was done, colonies were counted according to the standard method. Measures have been undertaken in order that improving hand hygiene of workers and to prevent cross-contamination of finished meat products (setting disinfection barrier through which is not possible passage without the prescribed time hand disinfection, control of hands before entering the processing plant snail meat for the presence of possible wound as a possible source of *Staphylococcus aureus*, wearing of gloves and employee training programs in the field of hand hygiene). The efficiency of preventive measures is determined by the analysis of swabs from the hands of workers and work surfaces before deployment and after the implementation of certain preventive measures.

The number of positive findings prior to the implementation of preventive measures was 7.60% of the total number of analyzes carried out and after the implemented preventive measures 2.28%.

The results of the study showed that *Staphylococcus aureus* was the cause of food handlers hand contamination in most cases. Analysis of *Enterobacteriaceae* in a sample swab is a good indicator of the efficiency of the washing and disinfection of the workers.

Key words: Hand hygiene, Food safety, Food handlers, Bacteria.