

MICROBIAL LIMITS USED FOR VARIOUS TYPES OF FOOD PROCESS SURFACES BASED ON CASE STUDY EVALUATIONS

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Abstract

In a hygiene survey the hygiene level in a food factory can be seen from statistics drawn from results classified as good, adequate and poor hygiene level. At the moment the risk management team in the food factories have to set the limits for the hygiene levels in their food factory based on the products produced and the shelf-life set for these products.

The aim of this study is to show the effect of various limits on hygiene surveys performed. In this study microbes were detected on both contact and environmental surfaces using 3M™ Petrifilms for aerobic bacteria, fungi and coliforms. The samples were taken after cleaning, just before work shift started, which means that at least the contact surfaces should be of good hygiene level.

The limits for the various microbes were set in three scales (loose, normal and strict) for the three levels (good, adequate and poor hygiene level) using real results from 10 food factories in Finland, Estonia, Turkey and Romania.

Key words: *Hygiene survey, Hygiene level, Surface hygiene, Surface colony forming unit limits, Surface cfu-limits, Aerobic bacteria, Fungi and coliforms.*