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MICROBIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF FROZEN LOBSTER AND CUTTLE FISH

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Fifty samples of frozen lobster tails in lots of five were collected from five processing factories A, B, C, D and E on two occasions. Forty five samples of cuttle fish were collected from three factories X, Y and Z on three occasions. The collected samples were analysed for total bacterial counts, total coliforms (MPN), Staphylococcus aureus and Salmonella. Cuttle fish samples were analysed for Vibrio parahaemolyticus.

The total bacterial counts ranged from 3.0×10^4 to 3.0×10^7 for lobster tails and for the cuttlefish the range varied from 1.5×10^5 to 2.1×10^8/g for both lobster tails and cuttlefish total coliforms varied from 3 - 1100/g, Staphylococcus aureus ranged from 50 to 10^4/g in lobsters and from 50 - 5.7×10^3/g in cuttlefish. All the samples analysed were negative for Salmonella and Vibrio parahaemolyticus.

The total count in cuttle fish is higher than that of lobster tails, reflecting the different processing techniques and longer transport time. It was also evident from the results that the microbiological counts of some samples, especially the total coliform and Staphylococcus count (1100/g and 10^3/g, respectively) were very high. These high counts could be due to unsatisfactory manufacturing practices.