

20<sup>th</sup> Global Summit on

# Food Processing, Safety & Technology

November 06-08, 2017 | Las Vegas, USA

## Microbiological safety levels of the South Sudanese bank notes in circulation at Juba University food restaurants

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Food borne infections arise from either a host of bacteria, viruses and parasites originating in food or pathogens introduced through cross contamination. This study assessed the potential microbiological cross contamination risk posed by South Sudanese Pounds in circulation at Juba University restaurants by examining the level of microorganisms (MOs) on banknotes. Bacterial contamination on the South Sudanese Pounds (SSP) in circulation at Juba University were determined using currencies collected from five different food serving points coded a, b, c, d and e, respectively. From each of the identified food serving points, five (5) random samples of 5 SSP, 10 SSP and 25 SSP bank notes were selected and their surface bacterial content enumerated. High and varying proportions of Total Coliforms (TC), *E. coli* and *Staphylococcus aureus* were detected. Findings revealed a significant correlation between MO levels and the denominations of the notes, with the smallest denominations having the highest levels of microorganisms per square centimeter; however there was no specific pattern in contamination levels between banknotes obtained from the different food points. Another factor that influenced the level of contamination was period the banknotes took in circulation with older notes having higher levels of MOs. High levels of MOs on banknotes coupled with often unhygienic food handling predisposes consumers to health risks. Strategies to reduce the risk of transmission of pathogens from the SSP are discussed with specific emphasis on awareness programs and improvement in hygiene concurrently with limiting physical contact between food and money in Juba University restaurants.

### Biography

Amegovu Kiri Andrew has completed his PhD in Human Nutrition and Dietetic and currently pursuing a Post-doctorate in Nutrition in USA. He has over 10 years teaching experience and is heading Department of Food and Sugar Technology, University of Juba, South Sudan. He is also the Director of Andre Food International, an NGO which implements community based nutrition program for UNWFP/UNICEF/UNHCR in Uganda and South Sudan. He has authored 13 publications in the areas of human nutrition and food safety. He is also a Peer Reviewer for 4 international journals.

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