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Fresh produce as a vehicle for the transmission of bacterial pathogens to humans

Preeti Verma, Vijay Veer Saharan and Arvind Pratap Singh
Central University of Rajasthan, India

Fresh fruits and vegetables often eaten without cooking or minimal further processing are important in healthy diet. However, recently several outbreaks of food-borne illness caused by human enteric pathogens have been linked to consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables and leafy greens. Therefore, the present study was conducted to determine the presence and antibiotic sensitivity pattern of human enteric pathogens colonize and persist in fresh vegetables and fruits. In the present study, we found that pathogenic *E. coli* epiphytically and endophytically colonize and persist in fresh vegetables/fruits. In addition, the highest percentages of drug resistance in isolates of *E. coli* were detected against clinically important antibiotics such as amoxicillin and chloramphenicol. In conclusion, the present study provided evidences that human enteric pathogen cycling through fresh produce might pose a potential health risk to the consumer. Therefore, in order to avoid this, good hygienic practices are necessary in the abattoirs to prevent contamination of fresh vegetables.

Biography

Preeti Verma has completed her MSc in Microbiology from Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati University, Ajmer and she is currently pursuing PhD in the Department of Microbiology at Central University of Rajasthan, India

cliktopreeti@gmail.com

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