

BACTERIOLOGICAL QUALITY OF COLLARED PECCARY MEAT (*Pecari tajacu*) STORED IN REFRIGERATION AND FREEZING

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This study aimed to evaluate the bacteriological quality of gammons and palettes of collared peccaries bred in captivity. Were collected 18 samples, nine of gammons and nine of palettes. The samples were submitted to the following analyzes: heterotrophic aerobic mesophilic bacteria count (HAMBC); heterotrophic aerobic psychrotrophic bacteria count (HAPBC); most probable number (MPN) of coliforms at 35°C, 45°C and *Escherichia coli*; coagulase-positive *Staphylococcus* sp. count; and *Salmonella* sp. search. The monitoring of the stability of the gammons and palettes under refrigeration and storage was carried out by the pH measurement at 3rd, 6th, 9th and 12th days of storage in refrigerator (5 to 8°C) and at 30th and 60th days of storage under freezing (-18°C). Were found, to mesophilic bacteria, values between 5.25 to 6.24 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ for gammons and 4.57 to 6.92 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ for palettes, both samples at zero time as those stored under refrigeration or freezing. Regarding the HAPBC, the results ranged from 3.71 to 4.95 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ on gammons and from 2.72 to 4.87 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ on palettes. The overall counts of *Staphylococcus* sp. fluctuated from 2.89 to 4.79 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ on gammons and from 2.97 to 4.72 log₁₀ CFU g⁻¹ on palettes. Regarding the coliforms at 35°C and 45°C, were found values greater than 3 log₁₀ MPN g⁻¹ for both gammons and palettes, including *in natura*, refrigerated or frozen samples. In all samples of gammons and palettes of collared peccary, *in natura* or stored under refrigeration and freezing, was not found the presence of *Salmonella* sp., therefore the samples are presented according to the criteria of the current Brazilian legislation (RDC 12 - ANVISA). The peccaries meat showed high levels of contamination by indicator microorganisms of hygienic-sanitary quality of raw material.

Keywords: collared peccaries, meat, bacteria