



Monitoring programme on the prevalence of *L.m* in RTE foods in the Member States

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EU RL for *Listeria monocytogenes*

Aim of the baseline study

- ❖ Mainly, to get information about:
 - the prevalence of *L. monocytogenes*
 - in certain Ready-To-Eat foods.

- ❖ The RTE foods are:
 - Packaged smoked or gravad fish,
 - Soft or semi-soft cheese, excluding fresh cheeses,
 - Packaged heat-treated meat products.

Sampling and analyses

- ❖ Sampling is performed by competent authority (CA) or under its supervision.
- ❖ Analyses are performed by NRLs.
 - Or other labs designated by competent authority.

Information

❖ **For packaged smoked or gravad fish:**

Products must be vacuum packaged or modified atmosphere packaged.

❖ **For soft or semi-soft cheese (excluding fresh cheeses):**

Products may be from raw, thermised or pasteurised milk from any animal species. They may be pre-packaged or packaged at the point of sale.

❖ **For packaged heat-treated meat products**

Products must have been heat treated, handled and vacuum packaged or modified atmosphere packaged.

Sampling design

- ❖ The samples are collected proportionally to the size of each Member State.
- ❖ Some of the rules of the sampling...
 - The sampling takes place in large cities.
 - The sampling are made in: supermarkets, small shops, speciality delis, and street markets.
 - The sampling takes place all over the year.
 - The RTE foods are selected according to the contribution to the market share.

Sampling collection and transport

- ❖ Samples must weight at least 100g.
- ❖ The surface temperature of the packaged sample is measured and recorded.
- ❖ Samples are kept at between 2 to 8°C.
- ❖ Samples are stored until the end of the shelf-life...
 - At the maximum storage temperature indicated on the label.
 - In case there is no temperature indicated on the label:
 - At the maximum temperature indicated by the regulation ($\pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$).
 - In case there is no temperature indicated by the regulation:
 - At 8°C ($\pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$).

Analyses

- ❖ pH, a_w are measured just after sample collection.
- ❖ Detection and enumeration* of *L. monocytogenes* are performed:

* (enumeration threshold = 10 ufc/g)

	After sample collection	At the end of the shelf-life
For smoked or gravad fish	X	X
For soft or semi-soft cheese		X
For heat-treated meat products		X

Isolates?

- ❖ Isolates shall be stored by the NRL for a minimum of two years for the typing.
- ❖ Isolates are typed either by the MS or by EU RL laboratory.

Number of samples to be taken in the Cyprus?

Member State	Population on 1.1.2008 (EUROSTAT data)		Harmonized stratified sample size	
	N (Million)	%	Per food category and analysis stage*	Total sample size
Cyprus – CY	0.8	0.2	30	120
Total EU	497.5	100.0	3 020	12 080

- 60 samples for packaged smoked or gravad fish,
- 30 samples for soft or semi-soft cheese,
- 30 samples for packaged heat-treated meat products.

Cost

❖ Costs to be reimbursed to the Member States:

Analysis	Euro
<i>L. m</i> detection	60
<i>L. m</i> enumeration	60
pH	15
a_w	20

EU contribution

Member State	Maximum total amount for co-financing of analyses for the (EUR)				
	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> detection	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> enumeration	pH	a _w	Total
Cyprus – CY	7 200	7 200	450	600	15 450
Total EU	724 800	724 800	45 300	60 400	1 555 300

