

CONSTRUINDO SABERES, FORMANDO PESSOAS E TRANSFORMANDO A PRODUÇÃO ANIMAL

## MICROBIOLOGICAL PARAMETERS OF SUN-DRIED MEAT WITH DIFFERENT SODIUM CHLORIDE LEVELS

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Among the dried meat commercialized in Brazil, the sun-dried meat is one of the typical foods of the North and Northeast regions most appreciated by Brazilians. This meat product is subject to salting processes and exposed to sunlight for maturation. However, the absence of effects and conditions in these food production processes can help reduce shelf life and endanger the health of consumers. This study aimed to evaluate the microbiological parameters of the sun-dried meat elaborated with different levels of sodium chloride, in a model system. Dry salting technique was used by rubbing sodium chloride manually. Next, the sun-dried meat samples were randomly suspended by hanging and placed apart so as to allow homogeneous movement of air at room temperature for three days. Sodium chloride was added in four different concentrations based on the weight of the sun-dried meat: 1g 100g<sup>-1</sup>, 3g 100g<sup>-1</sup>, 5g 100g<sup>-1</sup> and 7g 100g<sup>-1</sup>, to evaluate the contamination by thermotolerant coliforms, *Salmonella* sp. and *Staphylococcus* coagulase positive. The estimated count of thermotolerant coliforms was 10<sup>3</sup> MPN g<sup>-1</sup> for both treatments. *Salmonella* spp. was found in all samples. *Staphylococcus* coagulase positive counts ranged from 10<sup>1</sup> to 10<sup>2</sup> CFU g<sup>-1</sup>. Thermotolerant coliforms and *Staphylococcus* coagulase positive were within limits established by Brazilian law. Despite that, the presence of *Salmonella* sp. may be the result of contaminated raw materials, failures in food processing and/or handling, which poses a risk to the health of consumers of sun-dried meat.

**Keywords:** meat products, salting, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Salmonella* sp.

**Acknowledgments:** Microbiology laboratory of Universidade Federal do Mato Grosso, campus Universitário do Araguaia.

Promoção e Realização:



Apoio Institucional:



Organização:

