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Czech J. Food Sci.

**Gelbíčková T.,
Karpířková R.:**

Occurrence and characteristics of *Listeria monocytogenes* in ready-to-eat food from retail market in the Czech Republic

Czech J. Food Sci., 27 (2009): 3-7

The study objectives were to test ready-to-eat food from the retail market in the Czech Republic for the presence of *L. monocytogenes* and, based on typing methods, to investigate probable causes of contamination. A total 2180 samples of ready-to-eat food (meat, dairy, fish, delicatessen and confectionery products and fresh fruit and vegetables) were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. *L. monocytogenes* isolates were characterised by serotyping and macrorestriction analysis after digestion with the restriction enzyme *Ascl*. In 2004– 2008 *L. monocytogenes* was most often detected in delicatessen

(5.2%), meat (3.4%) and dairy products (1.8%). In the analysed samples, *L. monocytogenes* was mostly present at counts lower than 10² CFU/g. Only in 2004, higher counts of *L. monocytogenes* were found in two heat-processed meat products (10³ CFU/g). The obtained macrorestriction patterns helped in tracing the source of contamination and routes of the spread of *L. monocytogenes* in the manufacturing plant and retail market.

Keywords:

L. monocytogenes; foodstuff; typing methods; hygiene

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