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Title: Presence of Heavy Metals in Pork Products in Chennai (India)

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:: Table of Contents

:: Full Text

:: Citation

:: Quick Search in ASCI

Abstract: The presence of heavy metals in frozen and canned commercial pork products obtained from retail outlets of Chennai city was determined, by atomic absorption spectrophotometry using dry ashing method. The samples had cadmium from 0.038 to 0.545 mg kg^{-1}, chromium up to 2.244 mg kg^{-1}, copper up to 2.847 mg kg^{-1}, lead up to 6.290 mg kg^{-1} and zinc from 6.927 to 144.575 mg kg^{-1}. Generally, heavily spiced products had higher levels of heavy metals. Levels of cadmium exceeded the Maximum Permissible Level (MPL) of 0.1 mg kg^{-1} in 95.83% of the samples as stipulated by Food and Agriculture Organization (0.1 mg kg^{-1}), whereas no samples had copper content exceeding MPL (20 ppm) specified by Meat Food Products Order (MFPO), 25.0% of the samples had lead content exceeding the limit specified by MFPO (2.5 ppm) and 20.83% of the samples had zinc values exceeding the MPL of MFPO (50 ppm). The results of this study demonstrate the need for good manufacturing practices (GMP`s) and HACCP to control these heavy metals in pork products.

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