

MICROBIOLOGICAL SURVEY OF UNPASTEURISED SHEEP AND GOATS' DRINKING MILK (1997/1998)

1. At the request of the ACMSF, a MAFF funded survey of raw sheep and goats' milk for drinking in England and Wales was undertaken during the months of November/December 1997 and January 1998. Retail samples in their final packaging were collected. Where possible, milk from each producer was sampled on four separate occasions. Each sample was tested for the presence of a range of bacteria and for phosphatase activity (phosphatase is destroyed by pasteurisation).

2. A total of 111 samples were examined in the study, comprising 94 (85%) goats' milk and 17 (15%) sheep milk samples. The milk came from a total of 29 producers, 22 goats' milk producers, 4 sheep milk producers and 3 producers who milked both sheep and goats. In addition to the 111 raw milk samples examined, five samples were found to be phosphatase negative. This indicated that they had in fact been pasteurised and their microbiological results are not included in this survey.

3. No *Campylobacter* spp., *Salmonella* spp. or *E. coli* O157 were isolated in the survey. One sample contained *L. monocytogenes* at low levels. The results of enumeration tests for total viable counts (TVC), coliforms, *E. coli* and *S. aureus* are provided in the following tables.

TVC and Coliforms for Sheep and Goats Drinking Milk

log ₁₀ count/ml	TVC		COLIFORMS	
	SHEEP	GOAT	SHEEP	GOAT
<0	-	-	1	34
0.00 - 0.99	-	-	7	16
1.00 - 1.99	-	3	8	9
2.00 - 2.99	2	32	1	13
3.00 - 3.99	9	24	-	15
4.00 -4.99	5	24	-	3
>5	1	11	-	4
TOTAL	17	94	17	94

S. aureus and E. coli results for Sheep and Goats' Drinking Milk

log ₁₀ count/ml	<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>		<i>E. coli</i>	
	SHEEP	GOAT	SHEEP	GOAT
<0	15	85	13	75
0.00 - 0.99	1	1	3	13
1.00 - 1.99	1	2	1	3
2.00 - 2.99	-	1	-	2
3.00 - 3.99	-	2	-	1
4.00 -4.99	-	3	-	-
>5	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	17	94	17	94