Abstract

Introduction and objectives: the aim of this study was to assess the fatty acid profile of two cured meat products of similar manufacturing processes and characteristics, dry-cured ham (JA) and cecina (CE), a type of dry-cured beef. The obtained results were discussed in terms of the effects that each singular fatty acid, when consumed, could have on human health. Materials and methods: for this purpose, 10 samples of 100 g of JA and CE were obtained in local food stores in León, Spain. Lipids were extracted and transesterified, then a gas chromatography-mass was used to analyze the samples. Results and discussion: results for fatty acid profiles for JA and CE showed significant differences ($p < 0.01$), with these values for main lipids fractions, saturated fatty acid (SFA), monounsaturated fatty acid (MUFA) and polyunsaturated fatty acid (PUFA), respectively: 42.86%, 43.27% and 13.87 for JA and 46.87%, 46.96% and 6.20% for CE. SFA and MUFA percentages were slightly higher in CE at the expense of PUFA, specifically in the n-6 series, where values of 11.06% in JA and 3.91% in CE were obtained. In both products, the most prevalent fatty acid was a monounsaturated fatty acid, oleic acid, with percentages of 37.28% in JA and 38.48% in CE. Other fatty acids with higher percentages, with respect to total fat, were two saturated fatty acids: palmitic acid, 20.63% in JA and 22.95% in CE, and stearic acid, 18.65% in JA and 17.14% in CE.

Keywords

Fatty acids, Meat products, Health.