Shiga toxin producing Escherichia coli (STEC) is a food-transmitted pathogen. Serotype 157:H7 is considered the most clinically important, but 50% of STEC infections correspond to non-157 serotypes. In Venezuela, presence of non-157 STEC strains in meat products has not been reported, which was the reason for this study. Seventy ground meat samples were analyzed (35 bovine and 35 porcine). E. coli isolation was done in MacConkey sorbitol agar, supplemented with cefixim, and the biochemical identification was done according to FDA guidelines. DNA extraction and PCR assays were used for the identification of STEC 157:H7 and not 157 strains. Of the 70 samples analyzed, 50 (71.4%) were positive for E. coli isolation, and 47 sorbitol positive and 3 sorbitol negative strains were identified. PCR showed absence of STEC 157:H7 and presence of non-157 STEC Shiga toxin Stx1 and Stx2 producers in 4.3% of the samples analyzed. This is the first time that the circulation of non-157 STEC strains in meat products is demonstrated in this country, which suggests that prevention strategies associated to this pathogen should be established.

**Keywords**

non-157 STEC, PCR, bovine meat, porcine meat, Venezuela