Abstract

Introduction: technical Committee on Food Microbiology No. 61 has proposed an update of the first Cuban Standard for Microbiological Contaminants, published in 1987. Objectives: analyze and propose microbiological criteria for second and third class food sampling which would reflect the country’s climatic and ecological conditions, as well as the different forms of food preparation and consumption. Methods: food groups, microbiological parameters, health hazard categories, a sampling plan and microbiological criteria were established, based on Cuban standard NC 38-02-07:1987, the database of results obtained by national food analysis laboratories, and scientific bibliography. Results: seventeen human and animal food groups were defined. New microbiological parameters were included, those contained in standard NC 38-02-07:1987 were retained, and specifications were developed for surveillance parameters. Food products were classified into ten categories according to the risk involved, and representative sampling plans were applied based on n 5. The required microbiological criteria were established. Results were classified into three categories: acceptable, fairly acceptable and rejectable. Conclusions: with implementation of the standard, consumer protection was improved and product-related risks were reduced to a minimum.

Keywords

Food, animal food, microbiological criteria, microbiological parameters, sampling plans.