

Microbiological Analysis of Commercial Milk Samples in Ernakulam District, Kerala, with Special Reference to *Escherichia coli*

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Abstract: Milk is a staple component of the human diet worldwide due to its high nutritional value. However, due to its composition and water activity, it is also highly susceptible to microbial contamination, which poses public health risks. This study investigates the microbiological quality of commercially available milk samples in Ernakulam, Kerala, with a focus on detecting the presence of *Escherichia coli*, an indicator of fecal contamination. The Most Probable Number (MPN) method was employed to assess coliform presence across various brands. The findings underscore the critical need for improved hygiene during milk handling and distribution.

Keywords: contamination

