Comparison of the Efficacy of a Sulfuric Acid-Sodium Sulfate Blend and Lactic Acid for the Reduction of *Salmonella* on Prerigor Beef Carcass Surface Tissue

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Abstract

A study was conducted to compare the efficacy of a commercially available sulfuric acid-sodium sulfate blend (SSS) and lactic acid (LA) in reducing inoculated *Salmonella* populations on beef. Sixty pieces of prerigor beef carcass surface brisket tissue, collected directly from the processing line of a commercial beef processing plant, were cut into two sections (10 by 10 cm each) and spot inoculated (6 to 7 log CFU/cm²) on the adipose side with a six-strain mixture of *Salmonella*. One section per piece of brisket tissue was left untreated (control), while the second section was spray treated (5 s, 15 lb/in², and 33 mL/s flow rate) with unheated (21°C) or heated (52°C) solutions of SSS (pH 1.1) or LA (4%). Unheated and heated SSS lowered (P < 0.05) total bacterial counts from 6.3 to 4.6 and 4.3 log CFU/cm², respectively. Likewise, unheated and heated LA reduced (P < 0.05) total bacterial counts from 6.3 to 4.7 and 4.4 log CFU/cm², respectively. Initial counts of inoculated *Salmonella* populations (6.1 to 6.2 log CFU/cm²) were reduced (P < 0.05) to 4.2 and 3.9 log CFU/cm² following treatment with unheated and heated SSS, respectively, and to 3.7 and 3.8 log CFU/cm² after treatment with unheated and heated LA, respectively. Overall, the temperature of the chemical solutions had a small (0.3 log CFU/cm²), but significant (P < 0.05), effect on total bacterial counts but not (P > 0.05) on *Salmonella* counts. Regardless of solution temperature, *Salmonella* counts for LA-treated samples were 0.3 log CFU/cm² lower (P < 0.05) than those of samples treated with SSS. These results indicate that both unheated and heated solutions of SSS and LA are effective interventions for reducing *Salmonella* contamination on prerigor beef carcass surface tissue.


The study reported here in this Research Brief was not funded by the beef checkoff, but is made available to expand the usefulness of this checkoff-funded website for those interested in beef safety.