

TITLE: CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT FOOD MICROBIOLOGY ON THE BRAZILIAN LEGISLATION.

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ABSTRACT:

Food is essential for human nutrition and development, but the presence of microbiological foodborne pathogens that causes serious diseases has had become a worldwide public health problem. For ensuring the quality and security of the products sold at the market, there are specific regulatory agencies. The Brazilian Health Regulatory Agency (Anvisa – Agência Nacional de Vigilância Sanitária) is responsible to promote public health, by surveilling over products, services, processes, ingredients, and technologies that may present any health risks. Anvisa is the main governmental regulatory agency for food, drugs, pesticides, health products, sanitizers, among many other areas. Since the food safety is only a small field at this organization, this study aims to analyze Anvisa's regulation related to food microbiology, considering the principles established by the International Commission on Microbiological Specification for Foods (ICMSF). The food industry must respect Anvisa regulations, organized in Collegiate Board of Directors Resolutions (RDC) or Ordinances (Portarias), or it may suffer legal consequences by this agency or the Ministry of Health. The main RDC related to food safety is the RDC n. 12, of January 2nd of 2001, that, considering food safety for human health, and considering microbiological standards for food, approves the Technical Regulation on Microbiological Standards for Food. Most of the RDC related to food safety had an article mentioning that the products must meet the specific technical regulations of good manufacturing practices (GMP). The ICMSF creates a relation between microbiological criteria and food safety, and establishes an important concept: the Food Safety Objective (FSO), that specifies the maximum permissible level of a microbiological hazard in a food at the moment of consumption. Along with the GMP, the Good Hygienic Practices (GHP) and the Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) also contributes to the implementation of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP), which is fundamental to the risk management on food safety. By the many RDC analyzed in this study, it was observed that the Ministry of Health along with Anvisa have concerns about food contamination by microorganisms, but it is still far from an ideal standard, which requires more research about potential microbiological food contaminants.

Keywords: food microbiology, regulation, Anvisa, ICMSF

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