

Research project IZS VE 06/11

Health and hygienic analysis and correct identification of fish products in public canteens in the Triveneto area

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Lately, demand for fish on the part of public canteens (schools, hospitals and nursing homes) has grown due to its good nutritional properties. The particular health conditions and/or sensitivity of this group of consumers exposes them to greater risks of infection/food poisoning. It is therefore important to monitor the raw materials that end up in public canteens. The project has the goal to assess the health hazards that consumers may encounter when eating fish at public canteens. Today's consumer is increasingly interested in ready-to-eat or processed fish products which often cannot be easily inspected morphologically and require a DNA analysis, thus using biomolecular techniques to verify that the label is correct and it corresponds to the description, and that there has been no substitution fraud which replaces one species with another.

A microbiological study will help determine whether the quality of processed fish products is hygienic, and to assess food safety, especially in terms of the problem of *Listeria monocytogens*, a psychrophilic bacterium capable of surviving and multiplying in food categories such as ready-to-eat or processed food prepared using "bland technology", with a long shelf life at refrigerated temperature.

The goal the project has set itself is to enhance collaboration among Competent Authorities. The latter have the role to guarantee food safety for consumer health protection, to facilitate the management of non-conformance and plan mutually agreed upon corrective actions.