

Review Form 3

Journal Name:	European Journal of Nutrition & Food Safety
Manuscript Number:	Ms_EJNFS_126694
Title of the Manuscript:	Assessment of Microbial Contamination and Characterization of Bacteria Isolated from Whole and Sliced Ready-to-Eat Fruits Sold in Port Harcourt, Nigeria
Type of the Article	

General guidelines for the Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guidelines for the Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

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PART 1: Review Comments

<u>Compulsory</u> REVISION comments	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. Why do you like (or dislike) this manuscript? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	This manuscript addresses a critical public health concern by assessing microbial contamination in ready-to-eat fruits, which are increasingly popular among consumers seeking healthy dietary options. The characterization of bacteria isolated from both whole and sliced fruits provides valuable insights into the potential risks associated with foodborne pathogens and highlights the importance of proper handling and sanitation practices in the food industry. I appreciate this manuscript for its relevance to food safety and its potential to inform regulatory policies and consumer awareness. Additionally, the findings could stimulate further research into effective methods for reducing microbial contamination in fresh produce, ultimately contributing to improved public health outcomes.	
Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)	Yes it is quite descriptive and conveys the main focus of the study.	
Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.	Additional point: - include study area, study deign	
Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?	of course	
Please write a few sentences regarding the scientific correctness of this manuscript. Why do you think that this manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	This manuscript demonstrates scientific robustness and technical soundness through its systematic approach to assessing microbial contamination in ready-to-eat fruits. The methodology employed, including the collection of samples from multiple markets and the use of standard microbiological techniques such as total heterotrophic bacterial count (THBC) and total coliform count (TCC), ensures that the findings are reliable and reproducible. The identification of bacterial isolates through morphological and biochemical tests further strengthens the study's credibility, allowing for accurate characterization of microbial species present. Additionally, the analysis of environmental factors influencing contamination levels highlights the study's comprehensive nature, providing valuable insights into food safety challenges in Port Harcourt. Overall, the manuscript effectively integrates rigorous scientific methods with practical implications for public health, underscoring its significance in addressing foodborne illness risks in the region.	
Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.	of course	

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<p>Minor REVISION comments</p> <p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<p>yes</p>	
<p>Optional/General comments</p>	<p>This study provides valuable insights into the microbial contamination of ready-to-eat (RTE) fruits in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, highlighting a critical public health concern. Here are some general comments regarding the study:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relevance and Importance: The topic is highly relevant, especially in regions with inconsistent food safety regulations. The findings underscore the need for enhanced food safety measures to protect consumers from foodborne illnesses. 2. Comprehensive Methodology: The methodology is well-structured, involving a diverse range of fruit samples from multiple markets, which strengthens the study's representativeness. The use of standard microbiological techniques for analysis adds credibility to the results. 3. Clear Results Presentation: The results are clearly presented, with specific data on total heterotrophic bacterial counts (THBC) and total coliform counts (TCC) for each market and fruit type. This clarity allows for easy interpretation of the contamination levels and their implications. 4. Identification of Influencing Factors: The study effectively identifies environmental factors and handling practices that contribute to microbial contamination. This contextual information is crucial for understanding the root causes of the observed contamination levels. 5. Public Health Implications: The conclusion effectively communicates the public health risks associated with consuming contaminated RTE fruits. It emphasizes the urgency of addressing these issues to prevent potential outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. 6. Practical Recommendations: The recommendations provided are practical and actionable, focusing on improving vendor hygiene practices and regulatory oversight. These suggestions can serve as a foundation for interventions aimed at enhancing food safety in the region. 7. Future Research Directions: While the study is thorough, it could benefit from suggestions for future research, such as exploring specific sources of contamination or evaluating the effectiveness of proposed interventions over time. 8. Limitations: A discussion of any limitations in the study, such as sample size or seasonal variations in contamination, would provide a more balanced perspective on the findings. 9. Engagement with Stakeholders: Engaging local health authorities, vendors, and consumers in discussions about food safety practices could enhance the practical impact of the study's findings. <p>Overall, this manuscript makes a significant contribution to the field of food safety and highlights critical areas for improvement in handling and regulating ready-to-eat fruits in Port Harcourt.</p>	

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
<p>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</p>	<p><i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i></p>	

Reviewer Details:

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<p>Department, University & Country</p>	<p>Werabe University, Ethiopia</p>