Reviewer's report

Title: Molecular and Epidemiologic Analysis of a County-Wide Outbreak Caused by Salmonella enterica subsp. enterica serovar Enteritidis Traced to a Bakery

Version: 4 Date: 16 August 2004

Reviewer: Meirion Evans

Reviewer's report:

General

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Abstract

Rephrase Results paragraph as follows:
'During the week of the outbreak, 34 of 162 patients with gastroenteritis were positive for Salmonella, and 28 of these 34 cases reported eating the same kind of bread. 'In total, 28 of 34 patients who ate this bread were positive for salmonella compared to only 6 of 128 people who did not eat this bread (RR: 17.6, 95%CI 7.9-39.0, P < 0.001).'

Methods

P.5, line 5: 'Patients' for 'cases'
P.5, line 17: 'A patient' for 'patients'
P.6, line 2: rephrase 'to test the hypothesis that illness was caused by a specific food.'

Results

P.9, para 2: 'patients' for 'cases'
- THE TERM CASES SHOULD BE RESERVED FOR PATIENTS WHO MEET THE CASE DEFINITION
P.10, para 2: 'investigation' for 'surveillance'
P.10, para 2: Combine and rephrase penultimate two sentences as follows:
'In total, 28 of 34 patients who ate this bread were positive for salmonella compared to only 6 of 128 people who did not eat this bread (RR: 17.6, 95%CI 7.9-39.0, P < 0.001).'
P.11, para 2: 'investigation' for 'surveillance'

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

P.5 Suggest moving the two final sentences commencing 'Charts of all patients...' to the beginning of the methods section, before the description of the investigation of the 162 patients presenting during the outbreak week.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions
Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No

Declaration of competing interests:

None