**Reviewer's report**

**Title:** Prevalence of *Clostridium difficile* in raw beef, cow, sheep, goat, camel and buffalo meat in Iran

**Version:** 1  **Date:** 24 September 2013

**Reviewer:** Clifford Simango

**Reviewer's report:**

Prevalence of *Clostridium difficile* in raw beef, cow, sheep, goat, camel and buffalo meat in Iran.

**General Comments:**
The study gives an account of the prevalence of *Clostridium difficile* in raw meat of some domestic food animals. The study adds knowledge to the growing evidence that food animals may act as a source of *C. difficile* infection to humans. However, the manuscript is badly written. Major compulsory revisions should be made before a decision on publication can be reached. The authors should seek guidance from an experienced researcher in writing the manuscript. There are also many typographical and grammatical errors in the manuscript.

**Specific Comments:**

**Abstract.**
The percentages in the Results section should be rounded off to one decimal point.

**Methods.**
Line 84. The authors should indicate whether the various raw meat samples collected were ground meat or not. The authors differentiate beef from cow meat. How is beef different from cow meat?

Lines 96 and 102. The authors should name the Oxoid product whose code is given as SR0173.

Line 96. The authors should give the code number and manufacturer of the *Clostridium difficile* broth (CDB) used for enrichment.

Line 104. How were the three colonies per plate selected for further tests? Were there any criteria that were used in the selection of the colonies e.g. colonial morphology?

Line 105. The authors should provide details on the microbiological and biochemical tests that were carried out to identify the isolates.

Lines 106 – 108. The authors should provide details on DNA extraction (boiling, 10 min.) and PCR confirmation (housekeeping *tpi* gene detection).

**Results and Discussion.**
The authors should give an account of results before discussing them. There is no account given of the results in Table 1.

Line 147 - 148. The authors state that all the isolates were susceptible to metronidazole and vancomycin but results in Table 2 show that all the isolates were resistant to vancomycin.

There is no account given for the toxin genes which are presented in Table 1. There is also no discussion of the toxin gene results.

I wonder if the PCR Ribotyping was performed properly because it is difficult to believe that only one ribotype, 078 was detected in the isolates from different parts of the country.

The limitations of the study are not stated e.g. the small number of C.difficile isolates which were analysed in the study.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.