Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of the antibacterial activity of essential oils and extracts of medicinal and culinary herbs to investigate potential new treatments for irritable bowel syndrome.

Version: 2 Date: 22 June 2013

Reviewer: Ali Shafaghat

Reviewer's report:

1. Some corrections are needed on the numbers in Table 1 and should be rewritten.
Authors response:
We thank the reviewer for this comment. We agree that there was a problem with the statistical analysis on the results of the turbidometric assays. We have corrected this now.
We have now re-analysed the results of the turbidometric assays in Section 2.4 by carrying out a one-way ANOVA (post hoc test) on the OD600 values taken after 360 minutes. We found that there was a significant difference in the mean OD600 values after 360 minutes for all of the samples containing essential oils, compared to the “Standard” control lacking essential oil except for grapeseed oil. Thus all of the essential oils inhibited bacterial growth in the turbidometric assay, except for grapeseed oil, which we used elsewhere as a negative control. We have inserted the p value in the text and removed Table 1 completely.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

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