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BY ELECTRONIC MAIL & FEDERAL EXPRESS

Laura M. Tarantino, Ph. D.
 Director
 Office of Food Additive Safety
 Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN)
 Food and Drug Administration
 5100 Paint Branch Parkway
 College Park, MD 20740



Re: Citizen Petition Requesting FDA to Enforce Ban on Carbon Monoxide in Case-Ready Meat Packaging; Docket No. 2005p-0459

Dear Dr. Tarantino:

This submission is made on behalf of Kalsec, Inc. ("Kalsec") in support of the above referenced Citizen Petition filed on November 15, 2005. This submission includes scientific evidence from limited unpublished studies that were sponsored by Kalsec and conducted by S&J Laboratories of Portage, Michigan. These studies were designed to evaluate selected microbial and sensory characteristics of ground beef sold at retail in packaging containing carbon monoxide gas (carbon monoxide modified atmosphere packaging or "CO-MAP"), compared to ground beef sold in high oxygen modified atmosphere packaging ("high oxygen-MAP"). The experiments in this submission were conducted using ground beef samples purchased at retail in CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP packaging. The study reports from these experiments are provided in Appendices One, Two, and Three.

Although the results from these studies are limited, and involved a relatively small number of ground beef samples purchased in a local region, the findings lend support to the scientific evidence documenting the food safety and consumer deception concerns that have been raised concerning the use of carbon monoxide in fresh meat packaging, as detailed in the Kalsec petition and related submissions to the agency. A summary of our key findings are as follows:

1. On average, the commercially available CO-MAP ground beef samples tested were shown to have a statistically significant higher bacterial count, on the date of purchase or within a day of purchase, than commercially available ground beef packaged in high oxygen modified atmosphere packaging (high oxygen-MAP).
2. Some of the CO-MAP ground beef samples tested within their "use or freeze by" dates were found to have bacterial counts indicative of spoilage (i.e., bacterial counts of $>10^7$ colony forming units (cfu) /gram). In contrast, none of the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested within their "sell by" dates had bacterial counts indicative of spoilage.

Address:
 P.O. Box 60511
 Kalamazoo, MI 49005-0511

3713 West Main St.
 Kalamazoo, MI 49006

Telephone:
 269-349-9711
 800-323-9320

Web:
www.kalsec.com

Fax:
 Sales & Marketing 269-382-3060
 Help Sales & Lab 269-349-9055
 Customer Service 269-349-1195
 Purchasing 269-349-1558
 Accounting 269-349-1558

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3. The artificial reddish pigment (carboxymyoglobin) formed by the reaction of carbon monoxide in the CO-MAP ground beef samples was found to be stable, giving the ground beef a red appearance after the meat had been temperature abused or become spoiled.
4. The high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested showed color loss during temperature abuse and became "discolored" when the bacterial levels reached around 1×10^5 to 1×10^6 cfu per gram.
5. There was a significant difference in the odor profiles observed in the CO-MAP ground beef samples and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested as they aged, when the packaging was opened. In the CO-MAP ground beef samples, a sulfury odor was observed, while in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, a rancid odor more commonly associated with the spoilage of meat was observed. No aroma was observed in the CO-MAP ground beef samples or high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples before the packaging was opened.
6. In the early stages of temperature abuse, the rate of growth of microbes was higher in the CO-MAP ground beef samples tested, than in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested. In the latter stages of temperature abuse, the rate of growth of microbes was higher in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested, than in the CO-MAP ground beef samples tested.

The purpose of the original studies (see Appendix One, Studies I, II, and III) was to examine changes in microbial growth, color and odor that occurred in CO-MAP ground beef and high oxygen-MAP ground beef when samples were subjected to temperature abuse and to evaluate possible correlations between these changes. The studies were made more difficult by the high initial bacteria levels that were found in some of the CO-MAP ground beef samples that had been purchased from retail stores. Although the samples were tested within the labeled "use or freeze by" dates, some of the CO-MAP ground beef samples had initial aerobic and anaerobic plate counts of $>1 \times 10^6$ to around 1×10^7 cfu/gram. The studies were conducted in spite of this challenge, but three further studies were conducted to determine whether the high initial bacterial levels observed in the CO-MAP samples purchased directly from retail outlets were an anomaly (Studies IV, V and VI, associated with Appendices One, Two and Three). These studies examined the microbiological status of ground beef just as it was being purchased by consumers. All the studies detailed in this letter lend support to and help document the deception and food safety risks outlined in Kalsec's Citizen Petition.

Study I (Appendix One – Tables 1A and 1B).

Study I Objective:

To examine the effect of radical temperature abuse on bacterial growth in commercially available packages of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples.

Study I Method:

Twenty packages of CO-MAP ground beef (a brand containing 8 % fat with an April 18, 2006 “use or freeze by” date) were purchased from a single retail store in the local region. This was the freshest CO-treated meat available in the store on the day of purchase. Twenty packages of high oxygen-MAP ground beef (a brand containing 20% fat with an April 23, 2006 sell by date) were purchased from another retail store in a different city in the local region. The meat samples were transported on ice in coolers to S&J Laboratories Inc. Twelve samples of CO-MAP and twelve samples of high oxygen-MAP ground beef were used in the temperature abuse study and were placed on a table, without stacking, in a 70° F room under normal room fluorescent lighting. Eight control samples for each package type were stored in the dark at 4° C (39° F). Sensory and microbial analysis was conducted at time 0, after 8 hours of temperature abuse at 70° F, then every four hours up to 24 hours of temperature abuse. At the appropriate intervals, packages were visually examined, photographed, and then opened and analyzed for aroma and micro count. Microbial analysis was conducted in duplicate with each sample tray being alcohol swabbed where the tray film was cut with a sterilized scalpel. Tray film was peeled back and an informal aroma sensory panel was conducted with personnel from both Kalsec and S&J Laboratories. Microbial analyses were conducted in duplicate; two trays per treatment per sample period, measuring both aerobic and anaerobic plate counts. Microbial analyses were conducted under aseptic sampling procedures (USDA Microbiological Guide Book, 3rd ed., 1998). Samples were first physically divided into six portions. Half of the sample (1st, 3rd, & 5th, or 2nd, 4th & 6th portions) was collected and mixed thoroughly inside a sterile bag. Eleven (11) grams of mixed sample was withdrawn into a filtered stomacher bag and 99 mL of sterile phosphate buffer was added to provide a 10-fold dilution. A further dilution protocol was followed to dilute up to 1,000,000 times. Petrifilm® was used in this study (AOAC official methods 990.12). The aroma was evaluated by three untrained individuals, carefully comparing the odor to refrigerated control samples. Digital photographs were taken for each sample period using a Nikon cool pix 950 digital camera. See Appendix One for experimental results.

Study I Result Summary:

The initial high bacterial load in the CO-MAP ground beef samples made a true comparison of bacterial growth rates difficult. It was decided to repeat the experiment (Study II).

Study I Discussion:

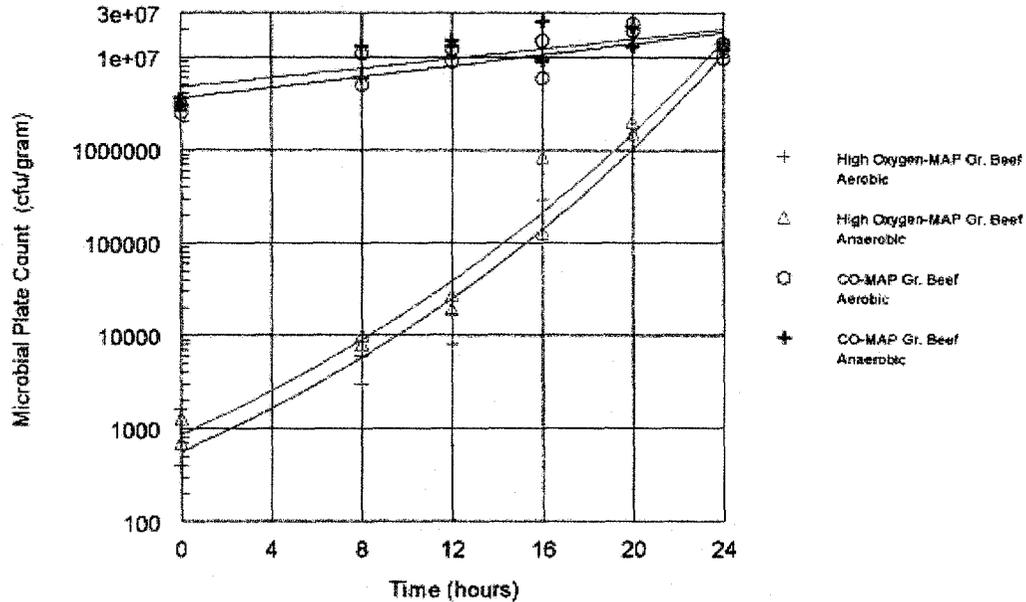
The aerobic and anaerobic plate counts of the samples stored at room temperature are listed in Table 1 and plotted in Figure 1 as a function of time. The plate counts for the CO-MAP ground beef samples, prior to any temperature abuse were very high (Table 1, top two data rows).

Table 1. Aerobic and Anaerobic Plate Counts of High Oxygen – MAP and Carbon Monoxide – MAP Meat Samples. Effect of Temperature Abuse – Study I.

| | Hours at 70° F | High Oxygen- MAP Aerobic Plate Count | High Oxygen- MAP Anaerobic Plate Count | CO-MAP Aerobic Plate Count | CO-MAP Anaerobic Plate Count |
|-----------|----------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sample | 0 | 400 | 700 | 2,500,000 | 3,100,000 |
| Duplicate | 0 | 1,600 | 1,300 | 3,000,000 | 3,600,000 |
| Sample | 8 | 3,000 | 10,000 | 5,000,000 | 6,000,000 |
| Duplicate | 8 | 6,000 | 8,000 | 11,000,000 | 13,000,000 |
| Sample | 12 | 8,000 | 19,000 | 12,000,000 | 13,000,000 |
| Duplicate | 12 | 17,000 | 27,000 | 9,000,000 | 15,000,000 |
| Sample | 16 | 290,000 | 840,000 | 15,000,000 | 24,000,000 |
| Duplicate | 16 | 110,000 | 130,000 | 5,900,000 | 9,100,000 |
| Sample | 20 | 1,700,000 | 1,500,000 | 19,000,000 | 13,000,000 |
| Duplicate | 20 | 1,900,000 | 2,000,000 | 23,000,000 | 21,000,000 |
| Sample | 24 | 10,000,000 | 13,000,000 | 9,600,000 | 12,000,000 |
| Duplicate | 24 | 13,000,000 | 15,000,000 | 14,000,000 | 14,000,000 |

As seen in Table 1, the anaerobic plate count of the CO-MAP ground beef samples prior to temperature abuse (the time zero samples in the first two data rows of Table 1) were initially over 3000 times higher than that of the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples tested, with the ratio decreasing to about 1000 times after eight hours of temperature abuse at 70° F, and to about 600 times at twelve hours, when the CO-MAP ground beef samples were still red. Ratios of aerobic plate count were of similar magnitudes in the CO-MAP and high oxygen MAP ground beef samples tested.

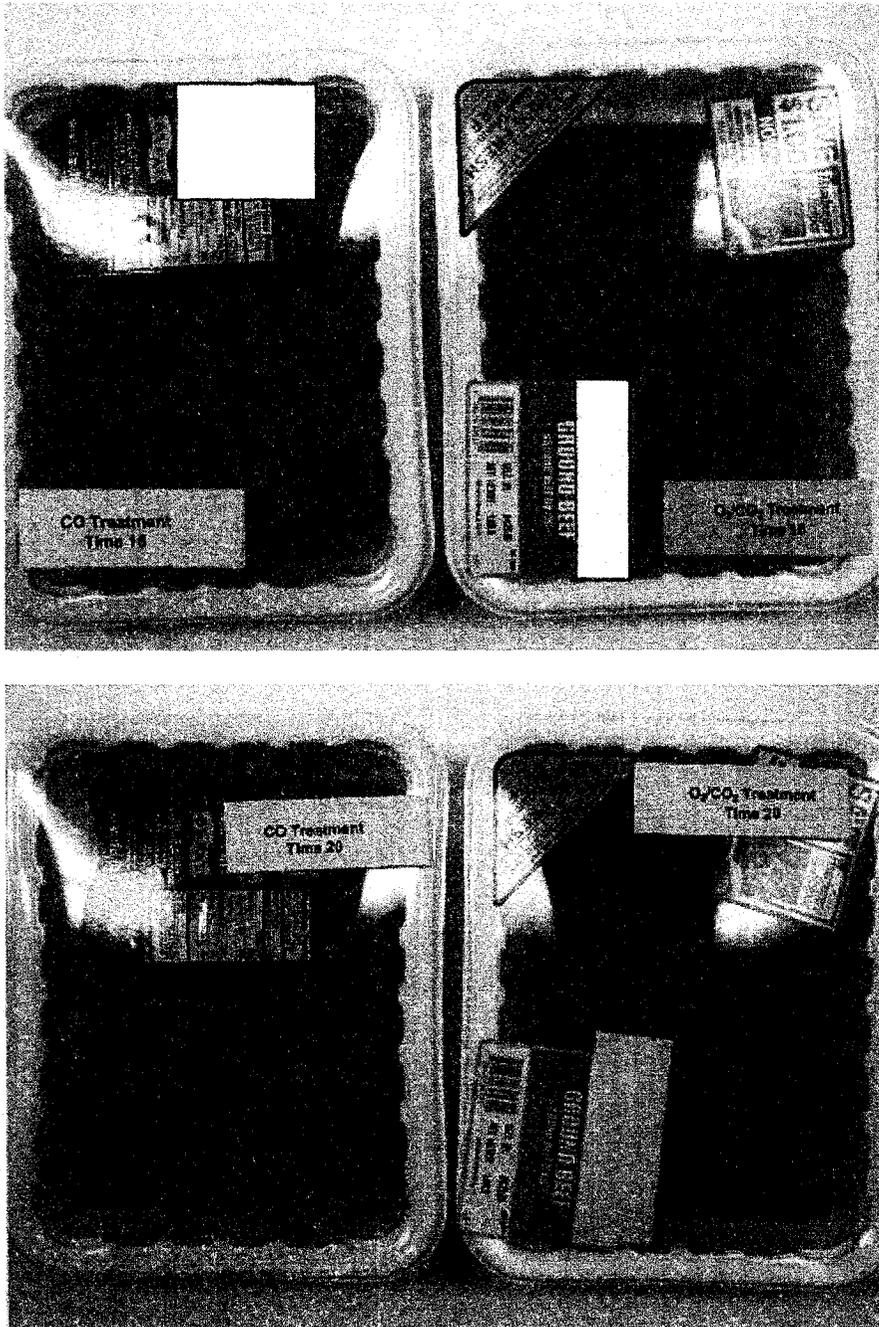
Figure 1. Microbial Plate Count of Ground Beef Stored at 70° F. Study I.



When purchased, the CO-MAP ground beef had 4 days remaining before the “use or freeze by” date. While this was toward the end of the shelf life, this was the freshest meat available at the retail outlet, and meat from this lot was abundantly available, with 20 packages of this lot being purchased. A roughly equal amount of CO-MAP ground beef was available with only 3 days left before the “use or freeze by” date at the same retail outlet. Figure 1 hints at an effect seen more clearly in Study II, namely, that microbial growth in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples occurred slowly at first and then built up steadily with time. For high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, the most rapid increase in microbial count occurred toward the end of the temperature abuse period. In contrast, the rate of microbial growth in the CO-MAP ground beef occurred more rapidly at first and then tapered off, seemingly reaching an asymptote somewhere above 1×10^7 cfu / gram. For CO-MAP ground beef samples, the most rapid increase in microbial count occurred at the beginning of the temperature abuse period.

The CO-MAP ground beef samples remained bright red throughout the temperature abuse period. The color of the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples changed throughout the course of the test, showing an easily noticeable color change at about 16 hours, when the micro count reached between about 10^5 and 10^6 . Figures 2 and 3 show photos of selected meat samples.

Figure 2. Photographs of Meat Samples After 16 and 20 Hours of Temperature Abuse. CO Treatment = CO-MAP Ground Beef; O₂/CO₂ Treatment = High Oxygen-MAP Ground Beef. Study I.



At time zero (no temperature abuse), the CO-MAP ground beef sample had an initial slight sulfur aroma (hydrogen sulfide), that dissipated quickly once the package was opened. Jay reports that vacuum packaged (anaerobic) meat often displays objectionable odors with bacterial levels in the range of 10^6 to 10^7 , and that H₂S is a

typical by-product of anaerobic bacterial growth [Jay, J.M., Modern Food Microbiology, Sixth Edition, Aspen Publishers Inc. 2000. Chapter 4, pg. 72.]. After 8 hours of temperature abuse at room temperature the CO-MAP ground beef sample still had a slight sulfur aroma, but it was observed that the aroma in this sample was less than that noted in the refrigerated CO-MAP control sample. There was no detectable difference in aroma or color between the 8 hour and the 12 hour temperature abused CO-MAP ground beef samples. After 16 hours of temperature abuse at room temperature, the aroma of the CO-MAP ground beef samples was noticeably different from the refrigerated CO-MAP ground beef control sample, with panelists describing a slight off aroma. After 20 hours of temperature abuse, the CO-MAP ground beef sample had a very noticeable sulfur aroma. The color remained bright red and fresh looking. After 24 hours of temperature abuse at room temperature, the CO-MAP ground beef had a strong H₂S aroma, but continued looking bright red and fresh.

At time zero (no temperature abuse), the high oxygen-MAP ground beef sample had no initial off aroma, and no significant off-aromas were noted in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples that had been temperature abused for 8 or 12 hours. After 16 hours of temperature abuse, the high oxygen-MAP ground beef had a slight buttery aroma and the color was starting to change. After 20 hours of temperature abuse at room temperature, the high oxygen-MAP ground beef sample had an off, spoiled, sour note, and was a very noticeable brownish color compared to the refrigerated high oxygen-MAP control sample. After 24 hours of temperature abuse at room temperature the high oxygen-MAP ground beef had a very noticeable off, spoiled / sour note.

Study II (Appendix One, Tables 2A., 2B., and 2C.)

Study II Objective:

- A. To examine the effect of radical temperature abuse on bacterial growth in commercially available packages of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples.
- B. To compare the aromas that developed during temperature abuse.

Study II Method:

Thirteen packages of CO-MAP ground beef (a brand containing 4 % fat with a May 9, 2006 "use or freeze by" date) were purchased in a single a retail store in the local region. This was the freshest CO-treated ground beef available on the day of purchase. Eighty-four packages of high oxygen-MAP ground beef (a brand containing 4% fat with a May 4, 2006 sell by date) were purchased from another retail store in a different city in the local region. The meat samples were transported on ice in coolers to S&J Laboratories Inc. Thirteen samples of CO-MAP and fourteen samples of high oxygen-MAP meat were used in the temperature abuse study and were placed on a table, without stacking in a 70° F room under normal room fluorescent lighting. Digital photography, sensory analysis, colorimeter readings and microbial analysis were conducted at time 0, after 8 hours of temperature abuse at 70° F, then every four hours up to 28 hours of temperature abuse. At intervals, packages were visually examined, photographed, and then opened and analyzed for aroma and micro count. The aroma was evaluated by three untrained individuals (using both Kalsec and S&J Laboratories personnel). Since the packages were labeled with brand names, the panelists were aware of the sample

identities when the aromas were being evaluated. The photographs taken at each analysis period on one tray from each treatment were made using a Nikon cool pix 950 digital camera by Kalsec personnel. Micro analyses were conducted in duplicate by S&J Laboratories personnel performed as in Study I, except for the time zero point for the CO-MAP ground beef sample, where only one package was analyzed. After sensory analysis, one tray from each treatment was measured for C.I.E. 1976 L*a*b* values using a Minolta CR-300 Chroma meter using the "C" light source and multi measure reading (average of three successive readings). L*a*b* readings were taken by Kalsec personnel directly through the package film with three readings taken per tray.

Study II Result Summary:

The bacterial growth curves for the CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples were different. For high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, the most rapid increase in microbial count occurred toward the end of the temperature abuse period. For CO-MAP ground beef samples, the most rapid increase in microbial count occurred at the beginning of the temperature abuse period.

The CO-MAP ground beef samples remained bright red and fresh-looking during the course of the temperature abuse and meat color was independent of bacterial load. The high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, in contrast, showed color changes after the temperature abuse led to increased bacterial levels.

There was a significant difference in the odor profiles of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples as they aged.

Study II Discussion:

Study II was basically a repeat of Study I, using a very similar protocol. It was started on April 27, 2006, using CO-MAP ground beef samples with a "use or freeze by" date of May 9, 2006. The high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples used in this study had a sell by date of May 4, 2006. The CO-MAP ground beef samples used in Study II had lower initial microbial plate counts than the CO-MAP ground beef samples used in Study I. However, other CO-MAP ground beef samples purchased the same day, with "use or freeze by" dates of May 2, 2006 and May 4, 2006 had higher initial plate counts and could not be used for this part of the study (see Study VI, below, for a discussion of the behavior of these samples initially and upon refrigerated storage).

The aerobic and anaerobic plate counts of the CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples stored at room temperature are listed in Table 2 and plotted in Figure 3 as a function of time. Once again, the microbial growth in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples was seen to grow slowly at first and then more rapidly with time. In contrast, the microbial growth in the CO-MAP ground beef samples occurred more rapidly at first and then tapered off, seemingly reaching an asymptote somewhere above 1×10^7 cfu / gram. Significant differences between the CO-MAP ground beef samples and the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples were observed after 8 hours of temperature abuse. High oxygen-MAP ground beef samples showed low values ($\sim 10^3$) for both aerobic and anaerobic plate counts, whereas CO-MAP ground beef samples jumped to $\sim 10^4$ for aerobic and $\sim 10^5$ for anaerobic plate counts, respectively. Higher

rates of growth of anaerobic microorganisms in the CO-MAP ground beef samples, as compared to the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, was observed after 12 hours at 21°C, during which time the microbial count reached $\sim 10^6$ in some testing samples, whereas the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples remained around $\sim 10^3$. The anaerobic environment of the CO-MAP ground beef samples appeared to enhance the growth of anaerobic microorganisms. The high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples did not reach 10^6 plate count until 24 hours of temperature abuse at 70° F, and grew to $\sim 10^7$ after another 4 hours. The CO-MAP ground beef samples reached $\sim 10^6$ (anaerobic) after 16 hours at 70° F under fluorescence light and reached $\sim 10^7$ at around 24 hours.

For CO-MAP ground beef samples, the color was consistent throughout the entire study (Table 2, redness: a^* value ~ 26) despite the microbial count increase from $\sim 10^3$ to $\sim 10^7$. The CO-MAP ground beef samples remained fresh looking during the entire temperature abuse study. In contrast, the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples lost their fresh red appearance gradually and a^* values dropped from ~ 25 to ~ 15 over the course of the test (see Figure 4). Photographs of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples after 16 hours of temperature abuse are shown in Figure 5.

Both high oxygen-MAP and CO-MAP ground beef samples had similar fresh beef odor initially. However, after 8 hours incubation at 70° F, the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples began to develop a slightly oxidized, rancid odor and the CO-MAP ground beef samples started to have a slight sulfur compound odor. For high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, the intensity of the oxidized, rancid odor increased in each of 4-hour evaluation periods. The unique sulfur compound odor in the CO-MAP ground beef samples also increased in strength at each 4-hour evaluation period.

Table 2. Aerobic and Anaerobic Plate Counts of High Oxygen – MAP and Carbon Monoxide – MAP Meat Samples. Effect of Temperature Abuse – Study II.

| | Hours at 70° F | High Oxygen-MAP Aerobic Plate Count | High Oxygen-MAP Anaerobic Plate Count | CO-MAP Aerobic Plate Count | CO-MAP Anaerobic Plate Count | a* High Ox.-MAP | a* CO-MAP |
|-----------|----------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|
| Sample | 0 | 1,000 | 200 | 4300 | 6,800 | 25.5 | 24.1 |
| Duplicate | 0 | 1,600 | 800 | | | | |
| Sample | 8 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 79,000 | 91,000 | 19.4 | 25.0 |
| Duplicate | 8 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 200,000 | 190,000 | | |
| Sample | 12 | 8,000 | 4,000 | 510,000 | 1,400,000 | 20.0 | 26.5 |
| Duplicate | 12 | 9,000 | 4,000 | 560,000 | 640,000 | | |
| Sample | 16 | 100,000 | 80,000 | 1,100,000 | 2,700,000 | 17.9 | 25.9 |
| Duplicate | 16 | 130,000 | 70,000 | 1,000,000 | 4,000,000 | | |
| Sample | 20 | 500,000 | 1,200,000 | 4,300,000 | 7,800,000 | 17.5 | 25.2 |
| Duplicate | 20 | 190,000 | 280,000 | 4,400,000 | 12,000,000 | | |
| Sample | 24 | 3,100,000 | 4,400,000 | 7,200,000 | 11,000,000 | 14.7 | 26.1 |
| Duplicate | 24 | 2,000,000 | 1,700,000 | 7,200,000 | 11,000,000 | | |
| Sample | 28 | 24,000,000 | 28,000,000 | 16,000,000 | 23,000,000 | 15.3 | 26.9 |
| Duplicate | 28 | 30,000,000 | 26,000,000 | 12,000,000 | 28,000,000 | | |

Figure 3. Microbial Plate Count of Ground Beef Stored at 70° F. Study II.

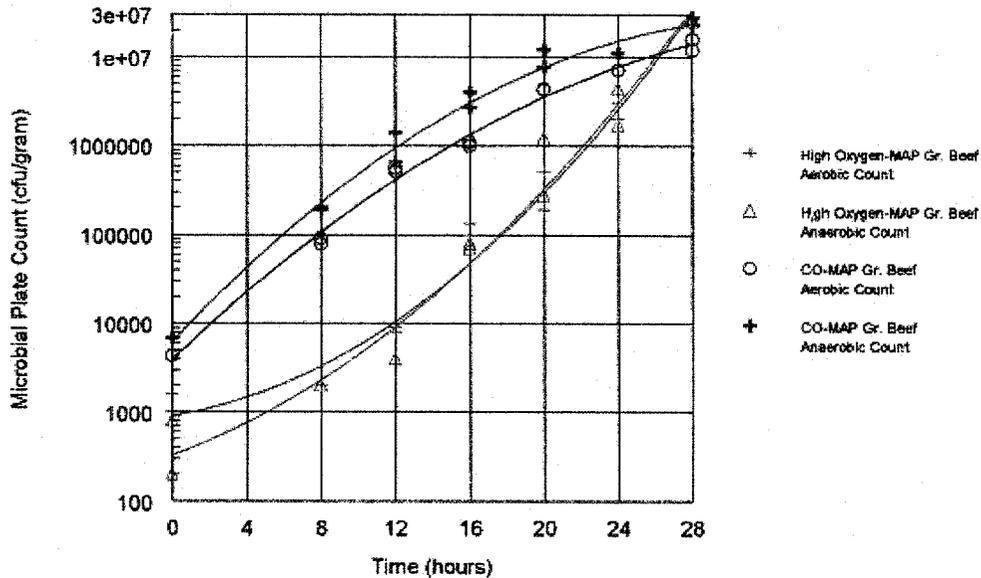


Figure 4. Color (a^*) as a Function of Time. CO-MAP vs. high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples. Study II.

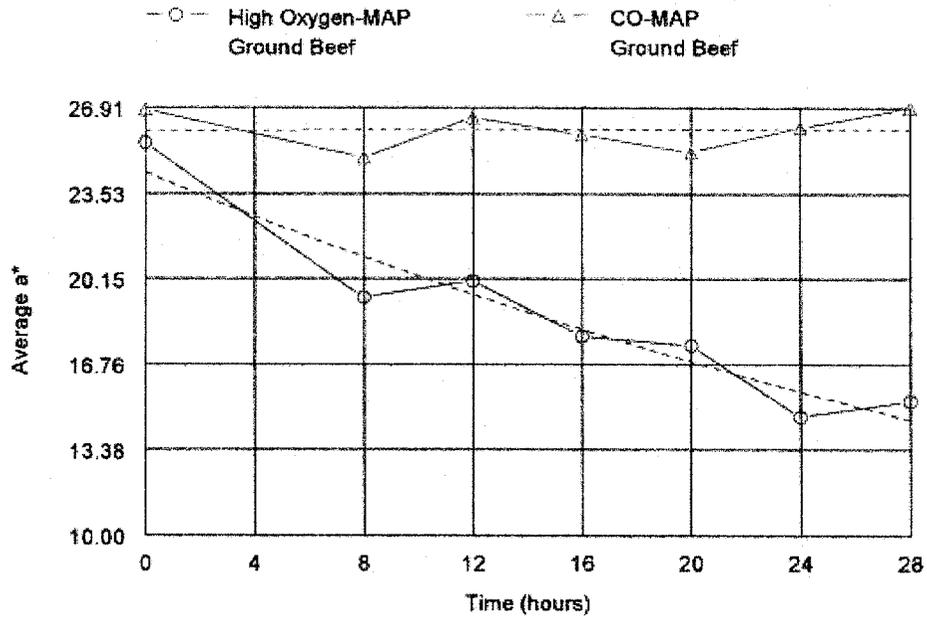
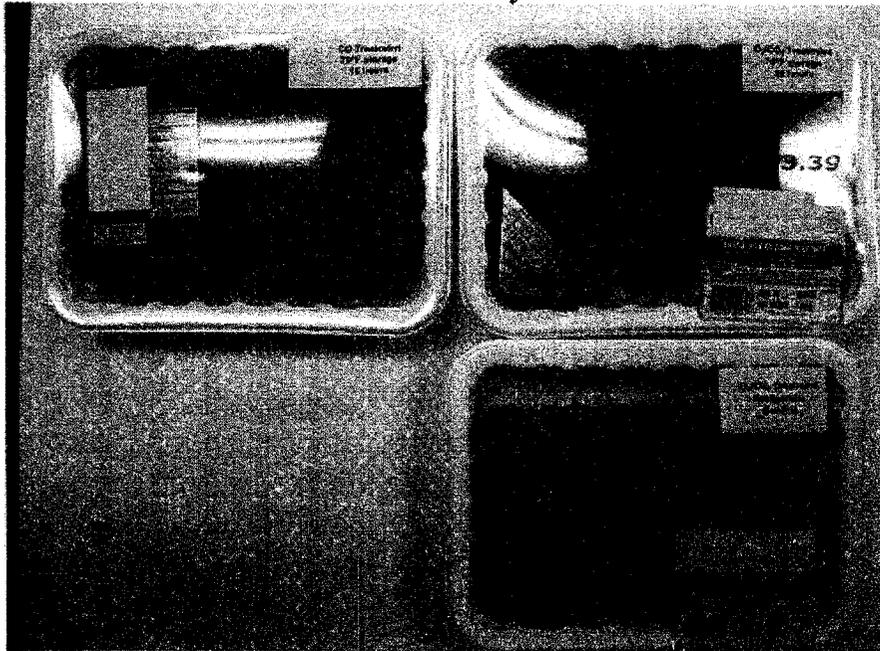


Figure 5. Photographs of CO-MAP and High Oxygen-MAP ground beef samples after 16 hours of Thermal Abuse. Study II.



Study III (Appendix One, Tables 3A., 3B. and 3C.)

Study III Objectives:

- A. To examine the effect a period of temperature abuse followed by refrigerated storage on bacterial growth in high oxygen MAP and CO-MAP ground beef samples.
- B. To compare the aromas that developed during temperature abuse.

Study III Method:

Twenty-four packages of CO-MAP ground beef (containing 7 % fat with a May 9, 2006 "use or freeze by" by date) was purchased in a single retail store in the local region. This was the freshest CO-MAP ground beef available in the store on the day of purchase. Some of the packages of high oxygen-MAP ground beef (a brand containing 4% fat with a May 4, 2006 sell by date) purchased as described in Study II were used in this study. The meat samples were transported on ice in coolers to S&J Laboratories Inc., the same day they were purchased (April 27, 2006). Thirteen packages of CO-MAP ground beef and fourteen packages of high oxygen-MAP ground beef were used in the temperature abuse study and were placed on a table, without stacking, in a 70° F room under normal room fluorescent lighting. After 8 hours of temperature abuse at 70° F, all the samples were moved to a temperature controlled 4° C refrigerator in the dark. Digital photography, sensory analysis, colorimeter readings and microbial analysis were conducted at time 0, after 8 hours of temperature abuse, then once a day for seven days. A photographic record was taken at each analysis period on one tray from each treatment using a Nikon cool pix 950 digital camera. Sensory, micro analyses and colorimetry analyses were conducted as in Study II.

Study III Result Summary:

The bacterial growth curves for the CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples were different. Bacterial levels in the CO-MAP ground beef samples increased more rapidly during temperature abuse than did the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples.

CO-MAP ground beef samples remained bright red and fresh-looking during the course of the entire study and meat color was independent of bacterial load. High oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, in contrast, showed color changes as measured by a* values after the temperature abuse led to increased bacterial levels.

There was a significant difference in the odor profiles of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples as they aged.

Study III Discussion:

In the third study, CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples were subjected to temperature abuse at 21° C (70° F) for 8 hours and then returned to proper refrigerated storage (4° C, 39.2° F). Microbial counts were measured when the samples were newly-purchased, prior to temperature abuse, immediately after 8 hours storage at room temperature (21° C, 70° F) and daily during seven days of post-temperature abuse refrigerated storage. The study was started on April 27, 2006, using CO-MAP ground beef samples that had a "Use or Freeze By" date of May 9, 2006, and high oxygen-MAP

ground beef samples that had a "Sell By" date of May 4, 2006. The microbial growth curves are shown graphically in Figure 6. Once again, the CO-MAP ground beef samples initially had a higher plate count ($>10^5$) than the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples ($\sim 10^2$ to 10^3). When thermally abused, the CO-MAP ground beef samples showed a rapid rise in micro count to about 4×10^6 . The increase in micro count continued at a much higher level in the CO-MAP ground beef samples during subsequent refrigerated storage, reaching a plateau at about 3×10^7 cfu/gram. In contrast, the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples showed a smaller initial jump in plate count during thermal abuse and had a much more gradual rate of increase, reaching only $\sim 10^5$ at the close of the test. The CO-MAP ground beef samples exceeded the spoilage limit of 10^7 colony forming units (cfu) per gram on day 1 or 2 of refrigerated storage. At this point, the samples were still within their "Use or Freeze By" dates. At day seven, the "Sell By" date for the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples was reached, and even the temperature abused samples had relatively low plate counts.

Once again, the CO-MAP ground beef samples remained bright red and fresh looking in appearance throughout the test, even though microbial levels were above 10^7 cfu / gram. The color behavior for both CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples is shown in Figure 7, where a^* values are plotted as a function of time. Data can be found in Appendix 1, Table 3B.

The high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples developed a slight oxidized odor immediately after temperature abuse. This odor remained about the same quality and intensity until just before the end of the refrigerated period. The CO-MAP ground beef samples developed a slight sulfur odor immediately after the temperature abuse period. Two days after being returned to the refrigerator, the sulfur odor became more noticeable. Four days after being returned to the refrigerator, the sulfur odor was described as being strong. At the end of the study, the sulfur odor was described as very strong. Aroma data can be found in Appendix One, Table 3C.

Figure 6. Plate Count During Refrigerated Storage After Temperature Abuse. CO-MAP vs. High Oxygen-MAP. Study III.

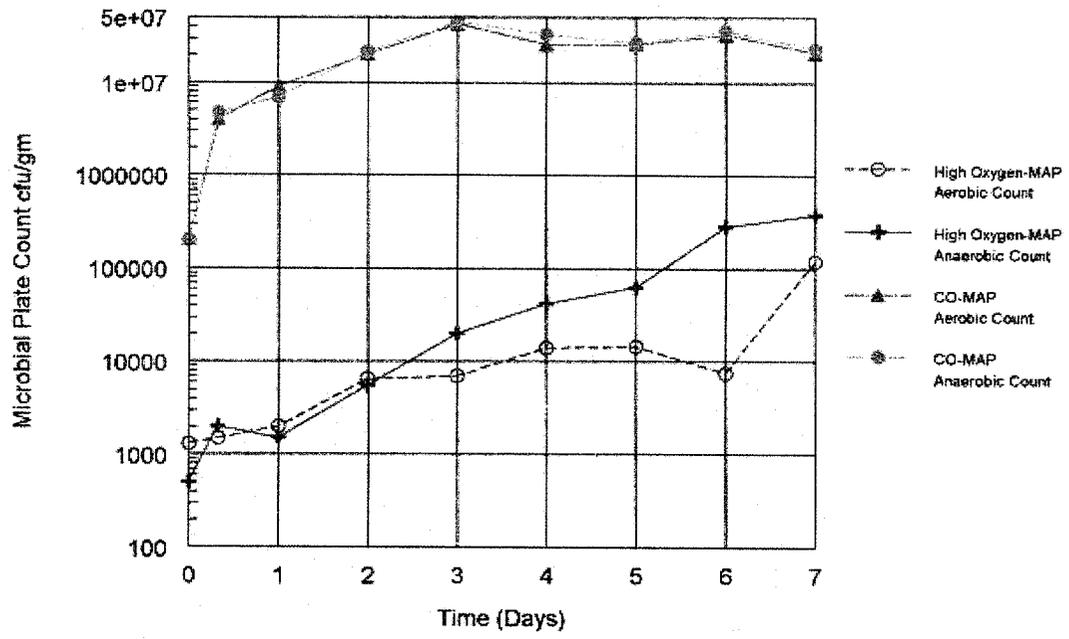
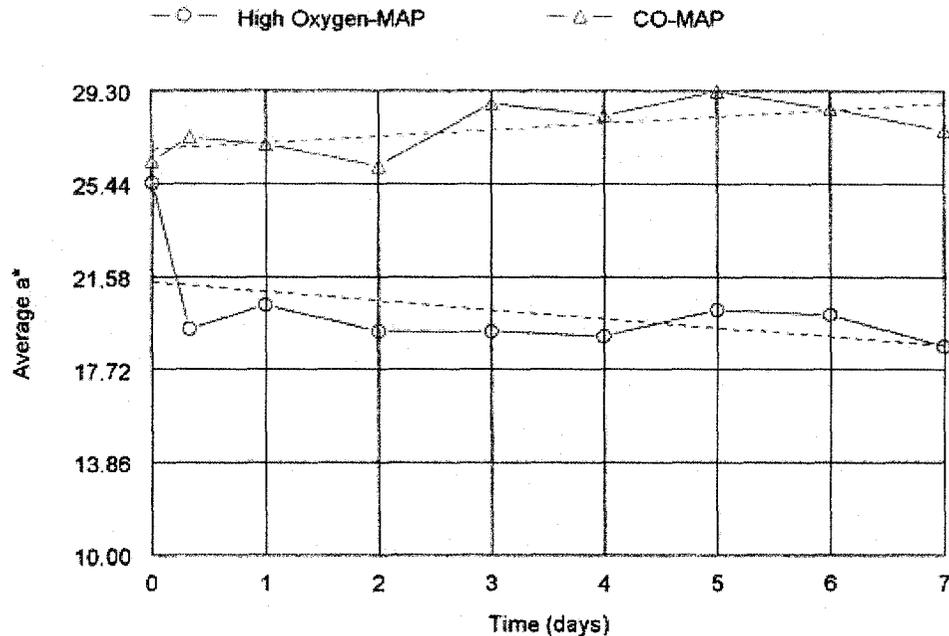


Figure 7. Effect of Temperature Abuse and Subsequent Refrigerated Storage on Color in Ground Beef. a^* vs. time. Study III.



Study IV – A Survey of Commercial Ground Beef (Appendix One, Table 4)

Study IV Objective:

To measure and compare the bacterial counts in freshly-purchased ground beef packages, comparing CO-MAP, high oxygen-MAP and traditional plastic overwrap packaging. A chub pack and a paper wrapped sample were also examined.

Study IV Method:

Twenty-three samples of ground beef were obtained from seven different retail stores. Seven of these samples were purchased on May 8, 2006, immediately packed on ice and then refrigerated overnight. Sixteen samples were purchased on May 9, 2006 and transported on ice in coolers to S&J laboratories Inc. for microbial analysis. Prior to microbial analysis the package headspace was measured for oxygen and carbon dDioxide in the MAP packages using a Dansensor Checkmate 9900. This headspace analysis was done by Kalsec personnel. Micro analyses were conducted using the same protocol as described earlier by S&J Laboratories personnel, except that measurements were made on single packages, with no replicates. See Appendix One.

Seven samples were obtained from a retail store in the local region on 5-8-06.

1. 4% fat, CO-MAP with a 5-16-06 “use or freeze by” by date.
2. 75% lean, CO-MAP ground beef with a 5-11-06 “use or freeze by” by date.
3. 75% lean, CO-MAP ground beef with a 5-9-06 “use or freeze by” by date.

4. 75% lean, CO-MAP ground beef with a 5-9-06 "use or freeze by" by date.
5. 8% fat ground beef patties, CO-MAP with a 5-16-06 "use or freeze by" by date.
6. 8% fat, CO-MAP ground beef with a 5-17-06 "use or freeze by" by date.
7. 85% lean, CO-MAP ground round with a 5-16-06 "use or freeze by" by date.

Three samples were obtained from a second retail store in the local region on 5-9-06.

1. 4% fat, high oxygen-MAP ground beef with a 5-13-06 sell by date.
2. 83% lean, high oxygen-MAP ground chuck with a 5-15-06 sell by date.
3. 26% fat, Certified Angus Beef over-wrap package with a 5-10-06 sell by date.

Two samples were obtained from a third retail store in the local region on 5-9-06.

1. 86% lean, certified ground round over-wrap package with a 5-11-06 sell by date.
2. 90% lean, certified ground sirloin over-wrap package with a 5-11-06 sell by date.

One sample was obtained from the meat counter at a fourth retail store in the local region on 5-9-06. This was ground hamburger with 27% fat.

Two samples were obtained from a fifth retail store in the local region on 5-9-06.

1. 90% lean, CO-MAP ground sirloin with a 5-20-06 "use or freeze by" by date.
2. 80% lean, CO-MAP ground beef with a 5-18-06 "use or freeze by" by date.

One sample was obtained from a sixth retail store in the local region on 5-9-06. It was an over-wrap ground hamburger with a 5-11-06 sell by date.

Seven samples were obtained from a seventh retail store in the local region on 5-9-06.

1. 96% lean, high oxygen-MAP extra lean ground beef with a 5-10-06 sell by date.
2. 96% lean, high oxygen-MAP extra lean ground beef with a 5-16-06 sell by date.
3. 85% lean, high oxygen-MAP ground round with a 5-16-06 sell by date.
4. 85% lean, high oxygen-MAP ground round with a 5-10-06 sell by date.
5. 73% lean, high oxygen-MAP ground beef with a 5-15-06 sell by date.
6. 73% lean, high oxygen-MAP ground beef with a 5-13-06 sell by date.
7. 93% lean, ground beef chub with a 5-16-06 sell by date.

Study IV Result Summary:

The levels of bacteria in the CO-MAP ground beef samples were, on average, higher than those in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, in a statistically significant manner.

Neither the overwrap packages, the chub package, nor the paper-wrapped ground beef sample were modified atmosphere packaged. None of these samples had been treated with carbon monoxide. They were included in this study in a very limited fashion simply to get a feel for the microbial plate counts for commercial examples of ground beef samples packaged in these ways.

Study IV Discussion:

Since so many packages of CO-MAP ground beef used in Studies I, II, and III were found to have very high micro counts immediately after purchase, and well within the "Use or Freeze By" date, a preliminary survey of commercial ground beef samples was performed. Several samples of ground beef in various types of MAP and non-MAP

packaging were purchased from seven different retail stores in the local region, and transported to S&J Laboratory, Inc. on ice and subjected to aerobic and anaerobic plate count measurements. The raw data is shown in Table 3. Also included in Table 3 are the results of the initial (time zero) measurements from Studies II and III. Statistical analysis of this non-normal data, using the one-sided t-test shows that with greater than 95% confidence, microbial levels for CO-MAP samples are greater than for all other samples not containing CO ($p = 0.029$ for anaerobic counts and $p = 0.027$ for aerobic counts). In a direct comparison between CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples (eliminating the overwrap, paper wrapped and chub samples), and using the one-sided t-test, the CO-MAP ground beef samples are shown to have higher microbial levels than the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples with greater than 96% confidence. The averages and ranges for aerobic and anaerobic plate counts for these MAP products are shown in Table 4.

Table 3. Preliminary Survey of Plate Counts of Commercial Ground Beef Samples. Study IV.

| ANALYSIS DATE | WHERE PURCHASED | PURCHASE DATE | SELL BY DATE | DAYS OF SHELF LIFE REMAINING | DANSENSOR O2 | DANSENSOR CO2 | PERCENT FAT | AEROBIC | ANAEROBIC | PACKAGE | CARBON MONOXIDE |
|---------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------------|
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | 0.03 | 17.20 | 4 | 25,000 | 35,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | 0 | 19.70 | 8 | 18,000 | 57,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/17/2006 | 8 | 0.001 | 20.70 | 8 | 170,000 | 540,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/9/2006 | 0 | 0.00 | 20.30 | 25 | 10,000 | 110,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/9/2006 | 0 | 0.00 | 20.3 | 25 | 10,000 | 150,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/11/2006 | 2 | 0.00 | 20.4 | 25 | 1,500,000 | 3,000,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | A | 5/8/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | 0.44 | 15.8 | 15 | 2,100,000 | 4,600,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | B | 5/9/2006 | 5/18/2006 | 9 | 0.00 | 20.3 | 20 | 15,000 | 32,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | B | 5/9/2006 | 5/20/2006 | 11 | 0.00 | 19.0 | 10 | 69,000 | 170,000 | MAP | YES |
| 5/9/2006 | C | 5/9/2006 | 5/13/2006 | 4 | 71.10 | 19.7 | 4 | 1,700 | 100 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | C | 5/9/2006 | 5/15/2006 | 6 | 69.30 | 18.6 | 17 | 1,500 | 2,000 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/10/2006 | 1 | 76.80 | 13.5 | 4 | 6,000 | 15,000 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/10/2006 | 1 | 76.60 | 11.8 | 15 | 14,000 | 41,000 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/13/2006 | 4 | 78.20 | 11.6 | 27 | 1,200,000 | 1,700,000 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/15/2006 | 6 | 79.50 | 11.1 | 27 | 7,700 | 12,000 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | 76.70 | 13.7 | 4 | 500 | 600 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | 80.00 | 11.4 | 15 | 200 | 400 | MAP | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | C | 5/9/2006 | 5/10/2006 | 1 | NA | NA | 26 | 7,000 | 17,000 | Overwrap | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | E | 5/9/2006 | 5/11/2006 | 2 | NA | NA | 10 | 17,000 | 19,000 | Overwrap | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | E | 5/9/2006 | 5/11/2006 | 2 | NA | NA | 14 | 6,000 | 21,000 | Overwrap | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | F | 5/9/2006 | 5/11/2006 | 2 | NA | NA | | 34,000 | 10,000 | Overwrap | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | G | 5/9/2006 | 5/9/2006 | 0 | NA | NA | 27 | 54,000 | 51,000 | Paper Wrap | NO |
| 5/9/2006 | D | 5/9/2006 | 5/16/2006 | 7 | NA | NA | 7 | 3,900 | 3,700 | Chub | NO |
| 4/27/2006 | C | 4/27/2006 | 5/4/2006 | 7 | NA | NA | 4 | 1,300 | 500 | MAP | NO |
| 4/27/2006 | A | 4/27/2006 | 5/9/2006 | 12 | NA | NA | 4 | 4,300 | 6,800 | MAP | YES |
| 4/27/2006 | A | 4/27/2006 | 5/9/2006 | 12 | NA | NA | 7 | 210,000 | 200,000 | MAP | YES |
| 4/27/2006 | A | 4/27/2006 | 5/4/2006 | 7 | NA | NA | 7 | 530,000 | 3,400,000 | MAP | YES |
| 4/27/2006 | A | 4/27/2006 | 5/2/2006 | 5 | NA | NA | 7 | 3,900,000 | 12,000,000 | MAP | YES |
| 4/17/2006 | A | 4/15/2006 | 4/18/2006 | 1 | NA | NA | 8 | 2,750,000 | 3,350,000 | MAP | YES |
| 4/17/2006 | C | 4/16/2006 | 4/23/2006 | 6 | NA | NA | 20 | 1,000 | 1,000 | MAP | NO |

* Reference: Official methods of Analysis of AOAC International, Ch.17, 17th edition, 2000. Bacteriological Analytical Manual By AOAC, 8th edition. 1998 Revision A

Table 4. Averages and Ranges for Micro Data From the Ground Beef Survey (Study IV).

| Samples | Aerobic Count Average | Anaerobic Count Average | Low Aerobic Count | High Aerobic Count | Low Anaerobic Count | High Anaerobic Count |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| CO-MAP | 808,000 | 1,975,000 | 4,300 | 3,900,000 | 6,800 | 12,000,000 |
| High Oxygen-MAP | 123,000 | 177,000 | 200 | 1,200,000 | 100 | 1,700,000 |

Figures 8 and 9 show plots of anaerobic and aerobic plate counts, respectively, vs. the attributes of MAP, overwrap, fat level and the presence or absence of carbon monoxide. It shows that the main driver for high microbial levels in this system is the use of the CO packaging atmosphere.

Figure 8. Anaerobic Plate Count vs. Attributes (Study IV).

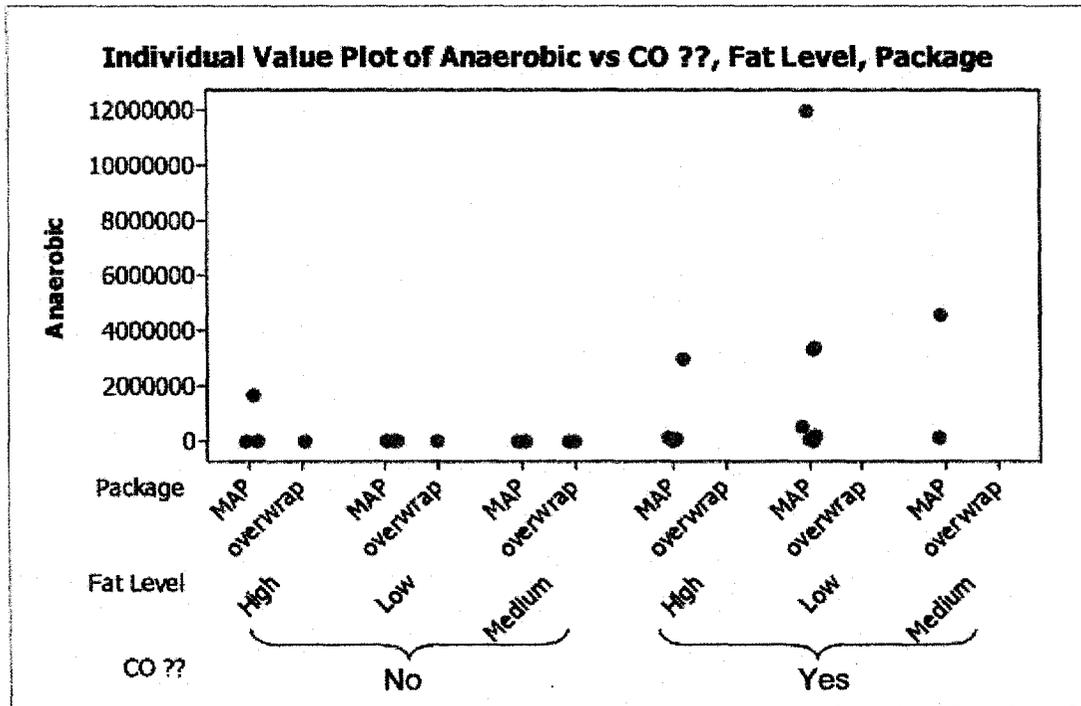
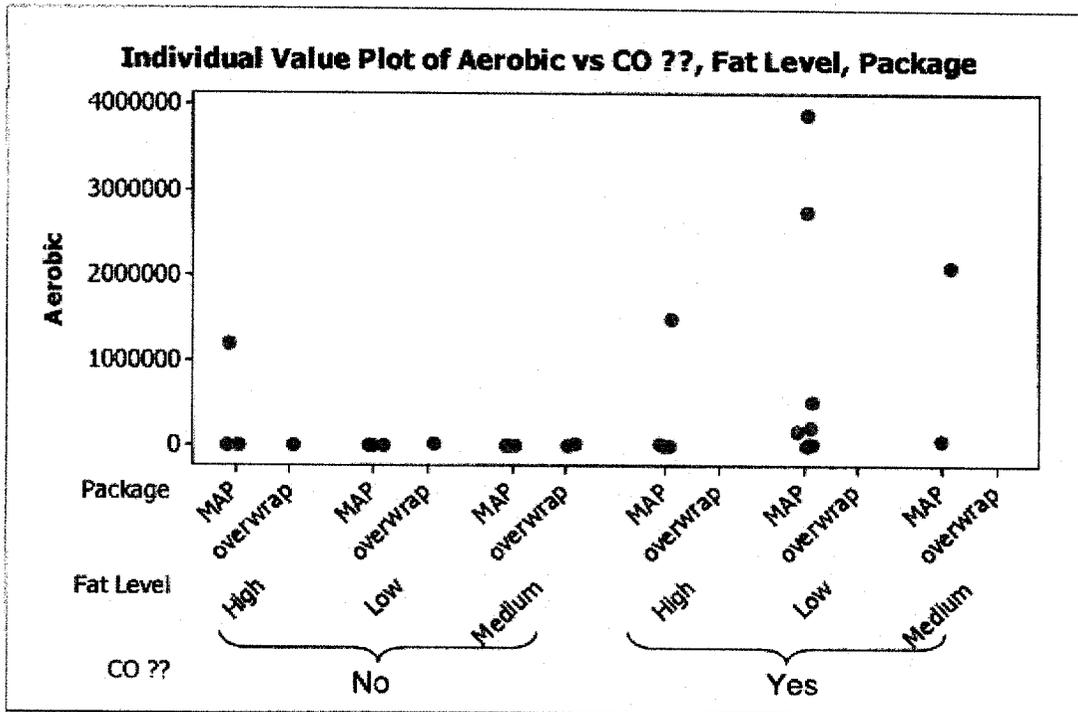


Figure 9. Aerobic Plate Count vs. Attributes. Study IV.



Study V – A Survey of Commercial Ground Beef – Using Replicate Analyses (Appendix Two).

Study V Objective:

To measure and compare the bacterial counts in freshly-purchased ground beef packages in CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP, using multiple sample replicates.

Study V Method:

Thirty packages of CO-MAP ground beef and thirty packages of high oxygen-MAP ground beef were obtained from four different retail stores in the local region, as outlined in Table 6. Samples were transported to S&J laboratories Inc. on ice in coolers for microbial analysis. Prior to microbial analysis the package headspace was measured for Oxygen and Carbon Dioxide in the MAP packages using a Dansensor Checkmate 9900 by Kalsec personnel. Micro analysis was conducted using the same protocol as described earlier by S&J Laboratories personnel. Data can be found in Appendix Two.

Study V Result Summary:

The levels of bacteria in the CO-MAP ground beef samples were higher than in the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples, in a statistically significant manner.

Study V Discussion:

In Study IV, individual packages of ground beef representing a number of packaging formats were purchased, transported on ice to S&J Laboratories and analyzed for microbial plate count. While statistically significant differences were observed in the levels of bacterial contamination between the CO-MAP ground beef samples and the other commercially available packaging varieties, it was thought that another study involving a number of replicate analyses would be helpful in confirming the quality differences that were seen in Study IV. In Study V, the type of meat packaging examined was limited to high oxygen-MAP ground beef and CO-MAP ground beef, with more than one brand for each type being examined. Where available, five packages of meat, with the same "use or freeze by" or "sell by" date, were analyzed for each brand examined. The raw data are shown in Table 5. Statistical analysis of this non-normal data, using the one-sided t-test shows that with greater than 99% and 95% confidence, respectively, the aerobic and anaerobic microbial levels for CO-MAP samples are greater than those packaged in the high oxygen modified atmosphere (p-Value = 0.005 for aerobic and 0.042 for anaerobic). The averages and ranges for aerobic and anaerobic plate counts for these MAP products are shown in Table 6.

Table 5. Survey of Plate Counts of Commercially Available CO and High Oxygen MAP Ground Beef. Study V.

| Sample # | Purchase Date | Analysis Date | Sell By Date | Days Remaining | % Fat | Location Purchased | CO? | Head Space %O ₂ /%CO ₂ | Aerobic Plate Count (cfu/g) | Anaerobic Plate Count (cfu/g) |
|----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-------|--------------------|-----|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 2 | 10 | A | No | 80.7/11.4 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 2 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 2 | 10 | A | No | 81.5/11.6 | 6,000 | 13,000 |
| 3 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 2 | 10 | A | No | 67.7/10.6 | 3,000 | 3,000 |
| 4 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 2 | 10 | A | No | 82.4/11.7 | 10,000 | 3,000 |
| 5 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 2 | 10 | A | No | 80.4/11.7 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| 6 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 7 | 20 | A | No | 84.3/10.3 | 500 | 600 |
| 7 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 7 | 20 | A | No | 83.8/10.5 | 700 | 800 |
| 8 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 7 | 20 | A | No | 84.1/10.6 | 900 | 1,200 |
| 9 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 7 | 20 | A | No | 82.6/10.1 | 700 | 300 |
| 10 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 7 | 20 | A | No | 82.7/10.3 | 900 | 700 |
| 11 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 6 | 4 | A | No | 84.6/12.3 | 2,100 | 700 |
| 12 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 6 | 4 | A | No | 83.2/12.5 | 3,100 | 2,600 |
| 13 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 6 | 4 | A | No | 80.9/12.4 | 2,000 | 1,400 |
| 14 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 6 | 4 | A | No | 82.9/13.0 | 1,100 | 1,800 |
| 15 | 5/22/2006 | 5/22/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 6 | 4 | A | No | 82.8/12.7 | 2,600 | 2,700 |
| 16 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 6/1/2006 | 9 | 7 | B | Yes | 0.024/17.4 | 160,000 | 290,000 |
| 17 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 6/1/2006 | 9 | 7 | B | Yes | 0.003/18.0 | 39,000 | 120,000 |
| 18 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 6/1/2006 | 9 | 7 | B | Yes | 0.001/17.7 | 220,000 | 290,000 |
| 19 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 6/1/2006 | 9 | 7 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.0 | 99,000 | 180,000 |
| 20 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 6/1/2006 | 9 | 7 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.6 | 61,000 | 120,000 |
| 21 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 15 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.1 | 12,000 | 58,000 |
| 22 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 15 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.5 | 19,000 | 28,000 |
| 23 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 15 | B | Yes | 0.000/19.2 | 9,000 | 40,000 |
| 24 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 15 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.4 | 11,000 | 78,000 |
| 25 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 15 | B | Yes | 0.000/19.0 | 35,000 | 48,000 |
| 26 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 4 | B | Yes | 0.000/19.1 | 120,000 | 210,000 |
| 27 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 4 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.6 | 130,000 | 330,000 |
| 28 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 4 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.8 | 120,000 | 330,000 |
| 29 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 4 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.4 | 140,000 | 380,000 |

Table 5. (Continued) Survey of Plate Counts of Commercially Available CO and High Oxygen MAP Ground Beef. Study V.

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|-----------|-----------|----|----|---|-----|------------|-----------|------------|
| 30 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/31/2006 | 8 | 4 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.6 | 180,000 | 300,000 |
| 31 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/30/2006 | 7 | 8 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.4 | 110,000 | 220,000 |
| 32 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/30/2006 | 7 | 8 | B | Yes | 0.000/19.0 | 79,000 | 220,000 |
| 33 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/30/2006 | 7 | 8 | B | Yes | 0.000/18.5 | 70,000 | 180,000 |
| 34 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/30/2006 | 7 | 8 | B | Yes | 0.000/19.4 | 100,000 | 190,000 |
| 35 | 5/23/2006 | 5/23/2006 | 5/30/2006 | 7 | 8 | B | Yes | 0.000/20.2 | 14,000 | 54,000 |
| 36 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 4 | C | No | 73.2/17.6 | 100 | 200 |
| 37 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 4 | C | No | 70.0/17.2 | 100 | 300 |
| 38 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 4 | C | No | 71.5/17.3 | 100 | 200 |
| 39 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 4 | C | No | 74.8/17.6 | 100 | 200 |
| 40 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 4 | C | No | 73.9/17.3 | 300 | 200 |
| 41 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 20 | C | No | 78.9/12.0 | 1,100 | 1,000 |
| 42 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 20 | C | No | 77.5/13.1 | 900 | 1,000 |
| 43 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 20 | C | No | 79.1/12.4 | 500 | 700 |
| 44 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 20 | C | No | 80.1/12.5 | 600 | 900 |
| 45 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 20 | C | No | 81.5/12.3 | 1,200 | 800 |
| 46 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 17 | C | No | 79.7/12.6 | 800 | 100 |
| 47 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 17 | C | No | 79.4/12.9 | 1,000 | 500 |
| 48 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 17 | C | No | 80.3/12.9 | 600 | 500 |
| 49 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 17 | C | No | 79.3/13.0 | 900 | 800 |
| 50 | 5/24/2006 | 5/24/2006 | 5/29/2006 | 5 | 17 | C | No | 81.0/12.4 | 500 | 300 |
| 51 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 3 | 10 | D | Yes | 0.002/26.9 | 2,900,000 | 27,000,000 |
| 52 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 3 | 10 | D | Yes | 0.000/22.0 | 1,400,000 | 4,600,000 |
| 53 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 3 | 10 | D | Yes | 0.000/21.9 | 940,000 | 3,700,000 |
| 54 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 5/28/2006 | 3 | 10 | D | Yes | 0.000/22.6 | 1,800,000 | 9,200,000 |
| 55 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/3/2006 | 9 | 10 | D | Yes | 0.000/24.1 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| 56 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/5/2006 | 11 | 20 | D | Yes | 0.000/22.4 | 170,000 | 440,000 |
| 57 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/5/2006 | 11 | 20 | D | Yes | 0.000/22.4 | 72,000 | 310,000 |
| 58 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/5/2006 | 11 | 20 | D | Yes | 0.000/23.2 | 260,000 | 400,000 |
| 59 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/5/2006 | 11 | 20 | D | Yes | 0.000/22.0 | 180,000 | 720,000 |
| 60 | 5/25/2006 | 5/25/2006 | 6/5/2006 | 11 | 20 | D | Yes | 0.000/23.1 | 120,000 | 300,000 |

Table 6. Averages and Ranges for Micro Data From the Ground Beef Survey (Study V).

| Samples | Aerobic Count Average | Anaerobic Count Average | Low Aerobic Count | High Aerobic Count | Low Anaerobic Count | High Anaerobic Count |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| CO-MAP | 319,000 | 1,677,000 | 1,000 | 2,900,000 | 1,000 | 27,000,000 |
| High Oxygen-MAP | 1,650 | 1,580 | 100 | 10,000 | 200 | 13,000 |

Figures 10 and 11 show plots of anaerobic and aerobic plate counts, respectively, vs. the attributes of fat level and the presence or absence of carbon monoxide.

Figure 10. Anaerobic Plate Count vs. Attributes (Study V).

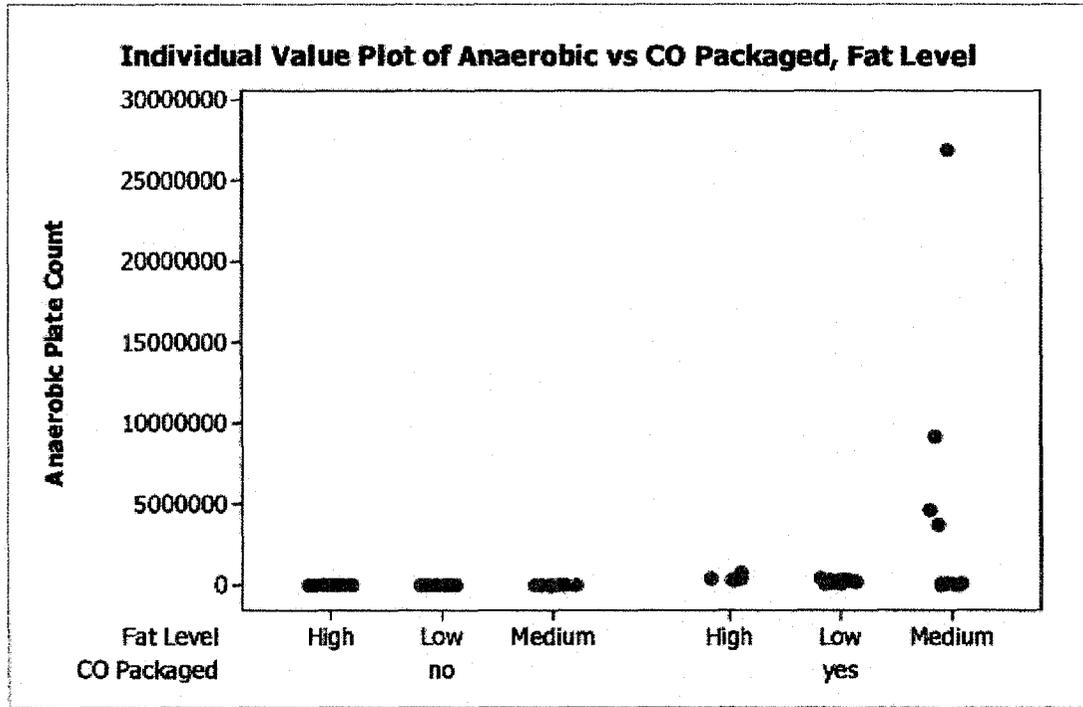
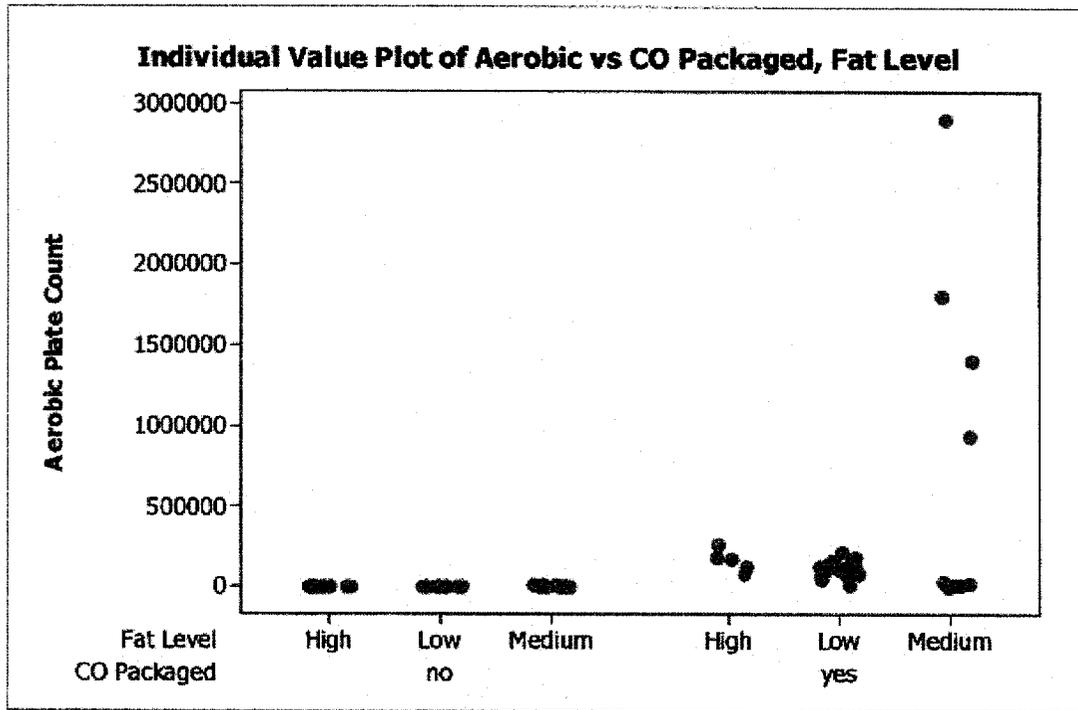


Figure 11. Aerobic Plate Count vs. Attributes (Study V).



Study VI (Appendix Three).

Study VI Objective:

To measure the anaerobic and aerobic plate counts of commercial meat samples immediately after purchase and at time intervals under proper temperature storage (4° C) until the end of the shelf life as determined by the printed "Use or Freeze by" date.

Study VI Method:

Thirteen packages of CO-MAP ground beef (containing 7 % fat with "use or freeze by" dates of May 2, 2006, and twenty-four packages of CO-MAP ground beef (containing 7% fat with a "use or freeze by" date of May 4, 2006) were purchased in a single retail store in the local region. Five packages of CO-MAP ground beef with the May 2, 2006 "use or freeze by" date and five packages of the CO-MAP ground beef with the May 4, 2006 "use or freeze by" date were used in this study. Ten packages of the high oxygen-MAP ground beef described in Study II (a brand containing 4% fat with a May 4, 2006 sell by date) were also used in this study. Samples were transported on ice in coolers to S&J Laboratories Inc. where they were stored in the dark in a controlled, 4° C refrigerator. Microbial analyses were conducted at time 0, and days 2, 4, 6, and 7, by methods described above. For the CO-MAP ground beef, one tray from each of the two sell by dates was analyzed for sensory and micro for each sample period. For the high oxygen MAP samples, micro analyses were run in duplicate. See Appendix Three for experimental results.

Study VI Results Summary

High levels of bacteria indicative of spoilage were found in samples of CO-MAP ground beef that had been purchased and then stored in the dark at 4° C (39.2° F) and analyzed periodically until the "Use or Freeze By" date had been reached. The counts were much higher than for the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples treated in the same way.

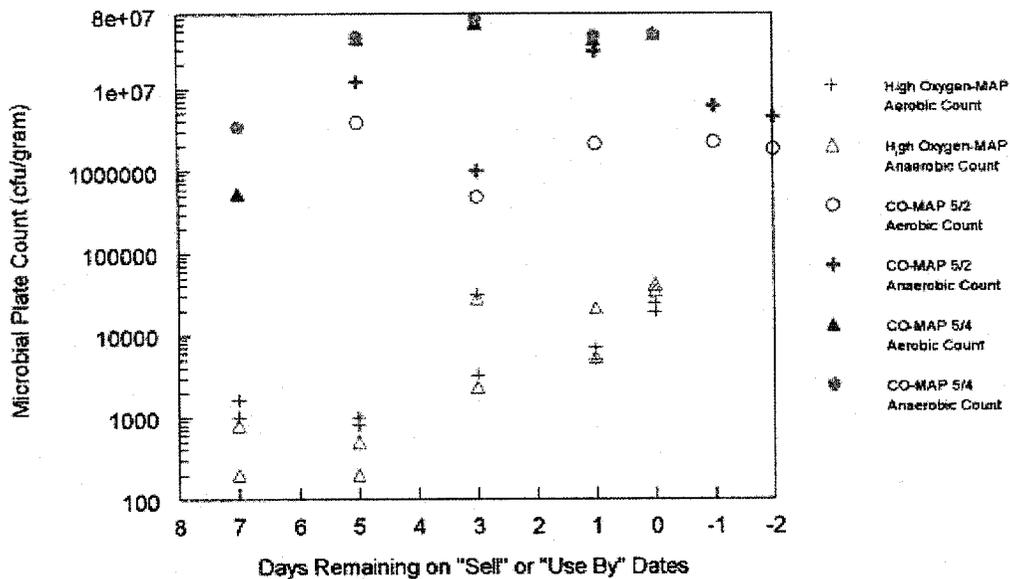
Study VI Discussion

Of the three lots of meat purchased for Study 2, only one could be used for the temperature abuse study, because the other two, with "Use or Freeze By" dates of May 2, 2006 and May 4, 2006, had very high plate counts. These meat samples were stored in the dark at 4° C and, periodically, a package of each lot was removed from the refrigerator and analyzed for aerobic and anaerobic plate count. Samples of high oxygen-MAP with a "Sell By" date of May 4, 2006 were also refrigerated and analyzed similarly. The results, presented in Table 7, and graphically in Figure 12 show two distinct populations. The CO-MAP meat exhibited bacterial counts of greater than 10⁷, indicative of spoilage, up to five days before the "Use or Freeze By" date, even though they had not been subjected to any temperature abuse and were stored under refrigeration at 4° C. These meat samples appeared bright red and fresh looking. In contrast, the meat packaged in the high oxygen-MAP system showed much lower plate counts.

Table 7. Bacterial Counts on Commercial Meat Samples as a Function of Shelf Life (Time until "Sell By" or "Use or Freeze By" Dates are Reached). Study VI.

| Days Remaining until Sell or Use by Dates Reached | Aerobic Plate Count High Oxygen-MAP 5/4/06 Sell by | Anaerobic Plate Count High Oxygen-MAP 5/4/06 Sell by | Aerobic Plate Count CO-MAP 5/2/06 Use by | Anaerobic Plate Count CO-MAP 5/2/06 Use by | Aerobic Plate Count CO-MAP 5/4/06 Use by | Anaerobic Plate Count CO-MAP 5/4/06 Use by |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 7 | 1,000 | 200 | | | 530,000 | 3,400,000 |
| 7 | 1,600 | 800 | | | | |
| 5 | 1,000 | 200 | 3,900,000 | 12,000,000 | 41,000,000 | 42,000,000 |
| 5 | 800 | 500 | | | | |
| 3 | 3,200 | 2,300 | 480,000 | 1,000,000 | 62,000,000 | 71,000,000 |
| 3 | 31,000 | 28,000 | | | | |
| 1 | 5,000 | 5,300 | | | | |
| 1 | 7,000 | 21,000 | 2,100,000 | 28,000,000 | 39,000,000 | 43,000,000 |
| 0 | 19,000 | 40,000 | | | | |
| 0 | 24,000 | 34,000 | | | 46,000,000 | 44,000,000 |
| -1 | | | 2,200,000 | 6,000,000 | | |
| -2 | | | 1,800,000 | 4,400,000 | | |

Figure 12. Anaerobic and Aerobic Plate Counts of Commercial Meat Samples as a Function of Days Remaining on Package Date. Study VI.

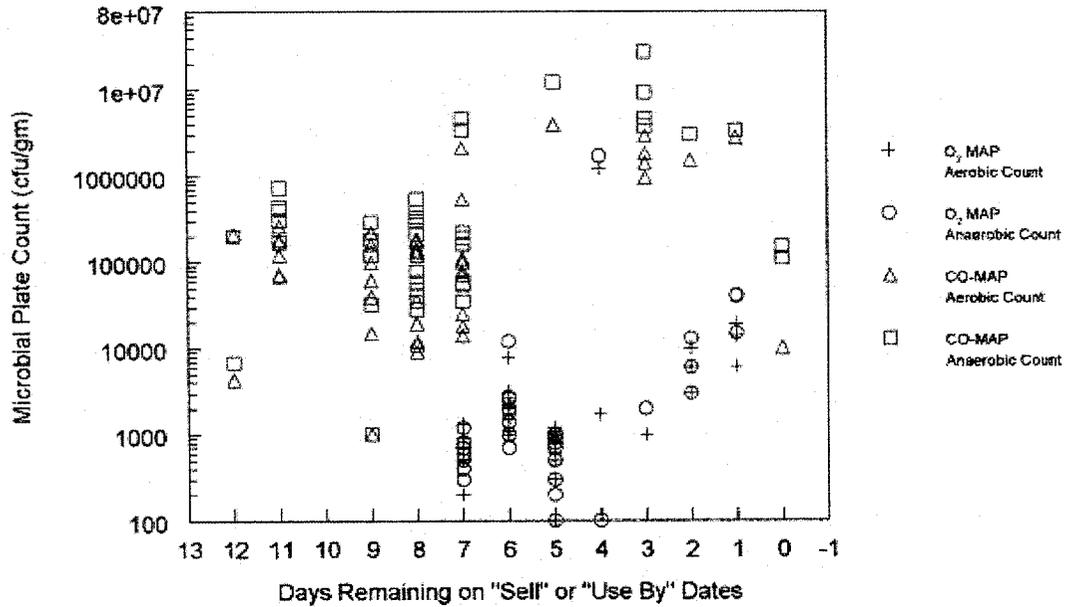


Combined Results from Studies IV and V.

Both Studies IV and V show significant differences in the bacterial counts between samples of CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples. The average plate counts for the CO-MAP ground beef samples were found to be much higher than those for the high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples.

Figure 13 shows a graph of the anaerobic and aerobic plate count of the CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples from Study IV and Study V plotted as a function of the number of days remaining on the "Sell By" or "Use or Freeze By" dates. The graph shows a clustering of the data into two distinct regions, with the CO-MAP ground beef samples generally showing much higher microbial levels. Some of the samples of CO-MAP ground beef had bacterial levels greater than 10⁷ at the time of purchase and within the "Use or Freeze By" date printed on the packages.

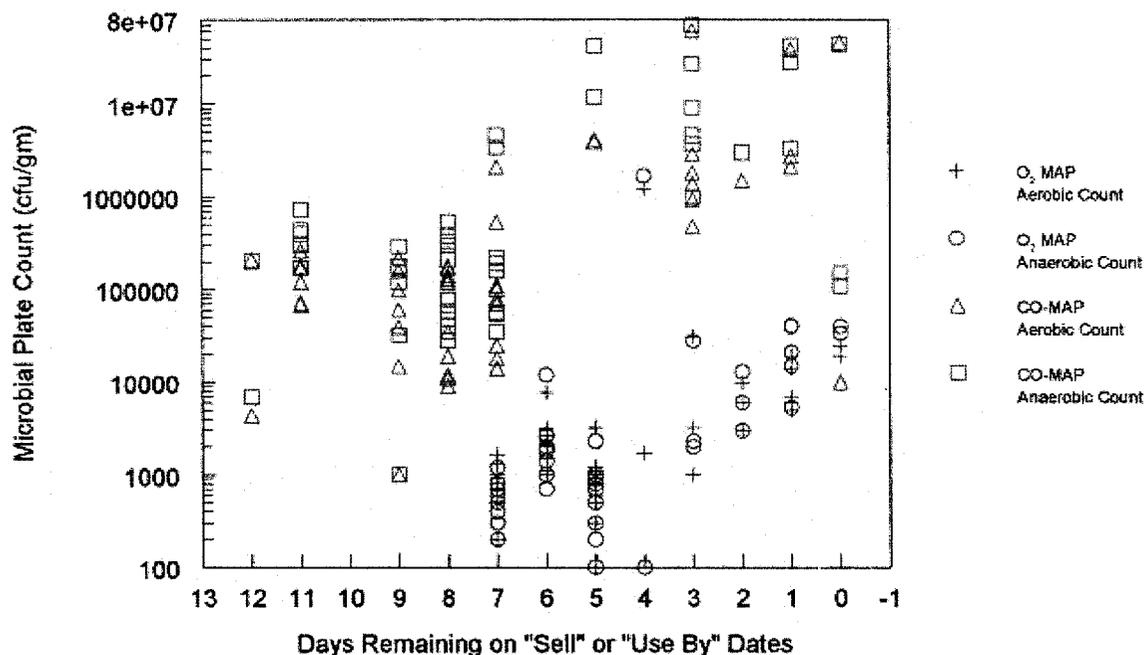
Figure 13. A Comparison of Bacterial Contamination Levels in Commercial Ground Beef. A combination of Data from Studies IV and V.



Combined Results from Studies IV, V and VI.

If one includes the data from Study VI, where both CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef packages were purchased, stored under good refrigeration conditions and analyzed up until the "Sell By" or "Use or Freeze By" dates, the resulting graph is that shown in Figure 14. The data shows distinct differences in microbial contamination levels between CO-MAP and high oxygen-MAP ground beef samples.

Figure 14. A Comparison of Bacterial Contamination Levels in Commercial Ground Beef. A combination of Data from Studies IV and V and Data on Refrigerated Storage from Study VI.



The data in this report lend further support to the food safety and consumer deception concerns set forth in the Kalsec citizen petition and related submissions to the agency concerning the use of carbon monoxide in fresh meat packaging. These findings indicate that CO-MAP ground beef sold at retail can remain red and fresh in appearance under conditions in which the meat has been temperature abused or contain bacteria levels indicative of spoilage. In addition, these findings raise concerns regarding the microbiological quality of CO-MAP ground beef that is sold in retail outlets. (See also results from limited study published in *Consumer Reports* at 51 (July 2006)).

Respectfully submitted,

Donald R. Berdahl, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President
Kalsec, Inc.