CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2002 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)
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Project Number
J1331

Project Title
Buyer Beware

Abstract

Objectives/Goals
The object of my science project was to find out which store#s shopping carts (Albertson#s, Pavillions, Rite Aid and Costco) had the greatest amount of bacteria. I believe that Rite Aid will have the greatest amount of bacteria because it has the highest person to cart ratio and doesn#t clean their carts. I think that Costco will have the least amount of bacteria because it has the lowest person to cart ratio and cleans their carts the most.

Methods/Materials
I swiped the handles and insides of two shopping carts from each store and inoculated them on a blood agar petri dish and left them in an incubator for three day to grow. After, I recorded my data.

Results
Pavillions had the least amount of colonies, while Rite Aid had the greatest amount of colonies and the most diverse. A colony on inside of a Rite Aid cart was beta-hemolytic streptococci, which causes Strep throat.

Conclusions/Discussion
My conclusion is that the amount of people who use the carts and how well they are cleaned do affect the amount of bacteria on a shopping cart.

Summary Statement
I tested shopping carts from four different stores for bacteria and compared the results to see which store had the most bacteria.

Help Received
Father set me up with Dr. Patel; Used lab equipment at Eisenhower Medical Center under the supervision of Dr. Patel.