ELSEVIER

Food Chemistry 72 (2001) 533

Food Chemistry

www.elsevier.com/locate/foodchem

Book review

***Clostridium botulinum:* A Practical Approach to the Organism and its Control in Foods**

C. Bell and A. Kyriades, Blackwell Science 2000, ISBN-0-632-05521-9. 328 pp. £27–50.

This book is the third in the series of *Practical Food Microbiology*. Previous volumes have looked at *Escherichia coli* and *Listeria,* whilst a new issue on salmonellae is also forthcoming. As with previous volumes, the writing style is clear and concise, but importantly is very factually accurate. Throughout, examples of food poisoning outbreaks are given that serve to amplify physiological and ecological behavioural patterns of the target organisms. This approach is used to draw upon previous experience and thereby attempts to reduce risk.

Clostridium botulinum produces an extremely powerful toxin that is active at very low concentrations. Whilst not as ubiquitous as other forms of food contamination, *C. botulinum* deserves special attention because of the lethal nature of its neurotoxin. The book will serve as a valuable information source for those involved in the food industry, but also microbiologists that have an interest in anaerobic metabolism.

Whilst maintaining an overriding direction towards food safety issues, the authors have also been careful to include scientific aspects of the organisms that are of interest in microbial pathogenesis. For example, the potential for distribution of the gene sequence for neurotoxin development is given attention.

In a practical volume such as this, the main remit may be seen as improved control/prevention of outbreaks. Happily, this is given significant attention here and many practical suggestions are made.

Overall, this book is very good value at £27.50, contains detailed information and should interest a very wide readership.

As an aside, the whole series lacks one important aspect of bacterial food safety. In this context, it is hoped that the publishers commission a volume, by these respected and established authors, on *Campylobacter*.

Glenn R. Gibson
School of Food Biosciences,
PO Box 226, The University of Reading, Whiteknights,
Reading, Berkshire RG6 6AP, UK

PII: S0308-8146(00)00244-2