

Canadian Study Identifies Off-Label Meat in 1 in 5 Sausages

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- Funded by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA), University of Guelph researchers have conducted the first-ever Canadian [study examining sausage mislabeling](#). The study examined 100 sausages that were labeled as containing just one ingredient — beef, pork, chicken or turkey.
- Published on July 31, 2017 in [Food Control](#), the study found cross-species contamination of meat ingredients in 20 percent of sausage samples from grocery stores across the country. Highlights of the study include:
 - The predominant meat species were determined in sausage samples using DNA barcoding.
 - Five turkey sausage samples contained chicken as the predominant species.
 - Contaminant meat species were detected using digital droplet PCR.
 - Undeclared species were detected in beef (6%), chicken (25%), and pork (5%) sausages.
 - Real-time PCR assay revealed that one pork sample contained horse meat.
- CFIA states that the goal of [the study](#) was to explore whether CFIA might be able to employ scientific methods employed by the researchers – such as DNA barcoding and real-time Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) assays – in its regulatory practices as it concerns product mislabeling. CFIA [says](#) that the scientific tools show promising results. It remains to be seen whether these findings will prompt CFIA to launch a broader study of this issue and, ultimately, whether the CFIA will consider regulatory measures that incorporate such testing to assure that food product labels are truthful and not misleading.

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