

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria found in food products for the first time

June 13 2014, by Bob Yirka



Credit: Wikipedia

A team of researchers with the University of Saskatchewan in Canada has found the first instance of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in a food product—*Pseudomonas* in a squid sold at a Chinese grocery store in Saskatoon. They reported what they'd found to the CDC in the United States, who promptly issued a warning letter about the find in an open-

access journal it hosts, *Emerging Infectious Diseases*.

As most everyone knows by now, the antibiotics physicians use to treat bacterial infections are becoming less potent as [bacteria](#) develop resistance to them. Scientists have continued to come up with new and better antibiotics as a result. Recently, however, that has become more difficult as fewer and fewer remedies have been found, leading scientists and agencies such as the CDC to issue warnings suggesting that we may soon run out of options altogether. Currently, the medical community uses standard antibiotics along with what are known as last-resort [antibiotics](#), they're called carbapenems—our last line of defense against many types of resistant bacteria. Sadly, some types of bacteria have already developed a resistance to some kinds of carbapenems, they produce carbapenemases—enzymes that render carbapenems ineffective. The *Pseudomonas* found in the squid in Canada is one such bacterial example, and is the first known instance of such a type of bacteria occurring in a food product.

Pseudomonas isn't a bad kind of bacteria, per se, it's what it represents that has the antibacterial community concerned. All by itself it likely wouldn't make anyone sick—but, if ingested, it would mix with other bacteria in the human gut which could lead to very serious problems—*E. coli*, for example that has the same resistance capabilities. The finding presents another threat as well, the possibility that the same type of resistant bacteria currently exist in other [food products](#) and aren't being found. Most governmental programs geared to examining food products for safety, only look for the usual suspects, *E. coli*, Listeria, etc. If relatively harmless resistant bacteria are in the food chain, it's only a matter of time, the researchers note, before harmful types of bacteria that can cause serious problems develop the same resistance, leaving physicians with no options to treat victims. A chilling announcement if ever there was one.

More information: Report: [content.govdelivery.com/accoun ...
CDC/bulletins/bd32d6](https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/CDC/bulletins/bd32d6)

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