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Prevalence and trends of bacterial contamination in fresh fruits and vegetables sold at retail in Canada

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## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

- **1** Prevalence and trends of bacterial contamination in fresh fruits and
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- 11 Abstract

12 In recent years, fresh fruits and vegetables have been linked to numerous foodborne illness 13 outbreaks in different regions of the world, including in Canada. In light of rising concerns over the microbial safety of these commodities, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency conducted retail surveys to 14 15 obtain information on the occurrence of bacterial pathogens in a wide range of produce available in the 16 Canadian marketplace (local vs. imported, organic vs. conventional). Samples (n=31,329) were collected 17 across Canada over four years (2009 - 2013) and consisted of leafy vegetables (n=12,073), leafy herbs (n=6,032), green onions (n=3,381), cantaloupes (n=3,230), tomatoes (n=4,837) and berries (n=1,776). 18 19 These samples were analysed in ISO 17025-accredited laboratories for various bacterial pathogens 20 (Salmonella, E. coli O157, Shigella, Campylobacter and Listeria monocytogenes), as well as for generic 21 E. coli, an indicator of fecal contamination. The Wilson confidence interval was used to determine the

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