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Is Ground Beef in Trouble?

An average American consumes about 28 pounds of ground beef a year. But with this large ground beef consumption there is also a large concern over the safety of this meat. It is known that ground beef has been recalled multiple times because of contamination, but most of the recalls have been from large meat production companies, instead of small local ones. So I wanted to test how factors in large-scale production affect the possibility of E-coli contamination. I bought ground beef from three stores, took samples, and then mixed them up. I had had zero to three people touch the mixed meat. Then I observed the effects of mixing meats together and the relationship between the number of people handling the meat and the amount of E-coli contamination. Based on my data, mixing meat from different places raises the possibility of E-coli contamination. Also according to my data as more people handle ground beef there is a larger amount of E-coli contamination. Also during my experimentation I discovered that meat storage temperature might be important. This experiment indicates the three possible factors for E-coli contamination in ground beef that is produced on a large scale. Mixing various meats from various places, the number of people handling the meat, and possibly, the storage temperature of the meat. This implies that preventing ground-beef contamination on a large-scale might be very difficult.