



SDI FINAL EVALUATION FORM 1.1

PART 1:

Journal Name:	American Journal of Experimental Agriculture
Manuscript Number:	Ms_AJEA_28207
Title of the Manuscript:	Shiga toxin Producing Escherichia coli (STEC) in Food Producing Animals from Trinidad and Tobago
Type of Article:	Original Research Article

PART 2:

FINAL EVALUATOR'S comments on revised paper (if any)	Authors' response to final evaluator's comments
The manuscript had slight improvements but the items 3, 5 and 6 from my comments were not answer SATISFACTORY. It was suggested to performer some methods such as phenotypic assays which they are important for the conclusions. However, any assay was added in new version. So, this study continues without support of these results. This study is local, and only presence of STEC is not novelty. Other results from methods (eg. Serotyping and subtypes of Stx) suggested could be important for epidemiology of STEC.	<i>With every due respect, we sincerely stand by the scope of our study and what we did. Even if we do serotyping, the results will not affect what we determined in the current analysis. The focus was not to determine clinical diseases or pathogenesis of infections associated with STEC in cattle. The study perhaps may be local, but we are reporting what is present in our locality, not elsewhere. Our responses to the reviewer queries still stands as follows:</i> <i>3. The scope of this first study was mainly focused on the Shiga toxins 1 and 2 genes. Perhaps in future studies and as we are able to source funds we will seek to expand the study to other subtypes of the stx2.</i> <i>5. We are happy the reviewer pointed this out. Unfortunately we could not perform the serotyping because of financial constraints. We hope to include this in any future studies.</i> <i>6. Again we do agree with the reviewer that E. coli "strains can have gene but without expression". And this is what our focus was on, to detect their presence and not necessarily determine if they were causing infection or diseases in the cattle. Our focus was on the carriage of these STEC in these healthy food animals.</i>