



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
A great work has been made by authors and now, the manuscript is strongly enhanced. The English writing can be improved yet. In this sense, the "Revised paper version 1" file is attached. There, some words or sentences are highlighted in green because they have been relocated, deleted or added, in order to achieve a better comprehension of the text, provided they do not alter the meaning of ideas. Other suggestions: <u>Abstract</u>, line 2: "harbouring" <u>Results and Discussion</u>: Page 5, Line 201: "...but not exhaustive"..., what does it mean? Line 217: "...with the positives..." Do you mean: "positive strains for both genes? Please, make it more comprehensible. Lines 228 to 231: The comprehension of this paragraph is very difficult. The way of STEC transmission from cattle to wild and domestic animals o vice versa? Please, rewrite. <u>References</u>: names of bacteria should be written in cursive.	The authors greatly appreciate the amount of time this reviewer has given to our paper and the valuable comments. All the changes have been accepted. We have also deleted all the words that were to be deleted. Abstract: The suggestion has been followed and the sentences are put in another way for clarification. The sentences now read as follows "<i>160 cattle faecal samples collected from 12 animal farms across Trinidad & Tobago were analyzed for E. coli bacteria. Using conventional and molecular microbiology laboratory techniques, the E. coli isolates were then screened for possession of the intimin (eae), Shiga toxin 1 (stx₁) and Shiga toxin 2 (stx₂) genes</i>". Results and Discussion Line 200 -201. This has been explained and now reads as follows "<i>The seven O groups tested are commonly associated with human infection [8] but they are by no means the only STEC groups causing human infections. Perhaps in our analysis, a greater number of faecal samples and a broader spectrum of testing could have yielded more of these groups</i>". Line 215 – 217 have been clarified. It now reads as follows "<i>Further statistical analysis revealed that a comparison of the number of samples with positive stx₁ and stx₂ gave an odds ratio equal to 35.88 (7.96<OR<220.34) and a relative risk =21.00 (<5.22<RR<84.41), the difference is statistically significant (p<0.000)</i>". Lines 227 – 231 has been rewritten and reads as follows "<i>However, there are various factors that can potentially influence the incidence of Shiga toxin occurrences by creating repetitive exposure. These factors include (a) poorly designed feeding troughs resulting in feed being contaminated with the faeces of wild or domestic animals; and (b) surface water and groundwater sources may be contaminated from effluent runoff from farms and urban areas [7]</i>". References: The names of all bacteria have been written in italics