**Table S1.** MLVA characteristics of EcO157 strains used. Number of tandem repeats at each of 11 loci are given.

|  |
| --- |
| Variable number of tandem repeats at each locus |
| MLVA | Strains testedb | Vhec1 | Vhec2 | Vhec3 | Vhec4 | Vhec5 | Vhec6 | Vhec7 | O157-17 | O157-19 | O157-25 | O157-37 |
| 163a | 6103, 6096, 6155, 9993, 6067, 6068, 9996, 6331, 6653, 6096, 6654, 6657 | 16 | 9 | 11 | 17 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 |
| 778 | 9834 | 35 | 9 | 17 | 13 | - | 9 | 13 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 11 |
| 174 | 6106 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 16 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 5 |
| 176 | 6088, 6440, 6441, 6157 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 17 | 7 | 9 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 |

a Strains in this group are also indistinguishable by their PFGE patterns

b The prefix ‘RM’ from each strain number is omitted for brevity.