



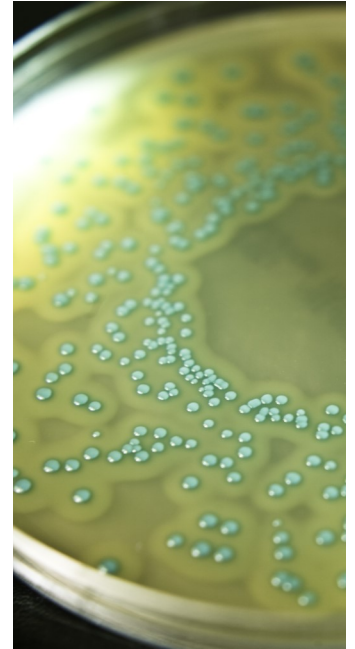
Standard Scheme

This microbiology scheme provides proficiency testing (PT) samples to food laboratories that routinely test for a range of food-borne pathogens and indicator organisms. To ensure that the public is protected from harm, food released onto the market for sale must be safe to be consumed.

This scheme helps you to identify gaps in your processes, highlighting where quality improvements can be made. It also provides an opportunity to improve staffs knowledge and experience with organisms not frequently encountered.

The scheme focuses on raising awareness of:

- the variations of methods used which can highlight differences in PT results
- atypical organisms circulating in the environment that may challenge a laboratory's interpretation of the PT sample
- the challenges associated with enumerating food samples and limitation of confirmation tests



Examinations for this scheme are:

Pathogen detections

Campylobacter spp.
Cronobacter spp.
Escherichia coli O157 (non-toxigenic strains)
Listeria spp.
Salmonella spp.
Yersinia enterocolitica
 Sulfite-reducing anaerobic bacteria

Enumerations

Aerobic colony count
Bacillus cereus - presumptive
Campylobacter spp.
Clostridium perfringens
 Coagulase-positive staphylococci

Coliforms
Enterobacteriaceae
Escherichia coli
Listeria monocytogenes
Listeria spp.

Six distributions are available each year, each containing two samples

Up to three sets of results can be returned for any examination.

Molecular methods can be used for pathogen examination or as a confirmation test



Your laboratory's personalised report will contain information such as:

- the contents and the levels of the samples
- performance data for each examination for you to compare your performance against other laboratories
- your on-going performance over a year which demonstrates your commitment to quality to clients and colleagues
- where relevant actions to take to ensure that your laboratory retains high standards
- educational information on difficult and challenging samples

For your investigation repeat samples are provided free of charge and further expertise can be provided by our panel of renowned food and water microbiologists

Satisfactory performance with your PT provides assurance that your laboratory is compliant with testing standards, thereby meeting and maintaining accreditation requirements.

Contact the Food and Environmental Proficiency Testing Unit:
Tel: +44(0)20 8327 7119 email: foodeqa@ukhsa.gov.uk



Assisting laboratories world wide in maintaining standards of excellence



Food, water and microbiology laboratories play a vital role in protecting the public's health by helping to ensure that food is safe to consume, waters are safe to drink and that environmental and recreational waters do not make people ill.

Proficiency testing or external quality assessment provides laboratories with an independent external assessment of their performance. Regular participation in proficiency testing schemes is an important part of laboratories quality procedures and helps to ensure that the results of their tests are accurate.

With over 25 years of experience, UK Health Security Agency's Food and Environmental Proficiency Testing Unit leads the world in providing microbiology proficiency testing schemes to food, water and environmental laboratories both in the UK and in over 70 countries internationally.

Our dedicated team of experts has unrivalled professional, scientific and technical expertise in proficiency testing, participants also have the additional advantage of drawing on the full scientific resources of UK Health Security Agency.

Benefits of participating in UK Health Security Agency's food and water proficiency testing schemes:

- Unique schemes provided:
 - that support both EU and non-EU legislation
 - inclusion of organisms such as *Mycobacterium* spp. in endoscope and cardia cooler waters
 - Molecular scheme for Shiga Toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*
 - *Vibrio cholerae* testing
 - *Staphylococcus aureus* Enterotoxin
 - Norovirus and Hepatitis A virus
- Free of charge repeat samples
- Access to expert food and water microbiologists
- Bespoke schemes reports provided
- UKHSA and z-scores provided in some scheme reports
- Ability to make extremely low level samples
- On-going performance assessment in the reports
- Samples provided in easy to use LENTICULE® discs
- Team members that speak several languages

PT Schemes available include:

Environmental Swab
European Food Microbiology Legislation
Standard Scheme
Non-Pathogen
Norovirus and Hepatitis A virus*
Pathogenic *Vibrio*
Shellfish
Shiga toxin-producing *Escherichia coli*
Staphylococcus aureus enterotoxin
Bottled and Mineral Water
Dialysis Water
Drinking Water
Endoscope Rinse Water
Hospital Tap Water
Legionella Isolation
Legionella Molecular
Recreational and Surface Water
Mycobacterium spp. in Water