



PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM

CARCASS HYGIENE

Company Background

Proficiency Testing Australia (PTA) is one of Australia's largest and most experienced proficiency testing providers. We have a reputation for providing friendly, customer-focussed service using qualified, experienced staff and specialists.

Proficiency Testing Australia is able to service a very broad range of industries, and many of our clients come to use our services based on the recommendation of colleagues. Proficiency Testing Australia has offices in Sydney and Brisbane, so our services and support are readily accessible.

Proficiency Testing Australia is accredited as a Proficiency Testing Provider by The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation. The accreditation covers the specific proficiency testing sample/artefact types listed on the agreed scope of accreditation. The accreditation meets the requirements of ISO/IEC 17043 *Conformity assessment - general requirements for proficiency testing*.

Aim of the Program

The purpose of this program is to evaluate the proficiency of export registered laboratories testing meat surfaces for generic *Escherichia coli* and total plate count.

Application of program to accreditation

Participation in proficiency testing programs would satisfy requirements of ISO/IEC 17025: 2005 *General requirements for competence of testing and calibration laboratories*.

Program Details

The Carcass Hygiene Program consists of two rounds per year. The rounds are usually scheduled for April/ May and October/ November of each year.

Laboratories are provided with four freeze dried samples representative of the material collected from a 300 cm² meat carcass swab site. Participants are asked to re-hydrate the samples and prepare sufficient media to perform testing for *E.coli* as directed by the AQIS Test Procedure and for Total Plate

Count using methods normally employed by the laboratory. Participants are also requested to provide details of the test methods used, the dilution factor and the count per cm².

Laboratories results are assessed for the number of extreme results that are reported. Statistical outliers are identified using a robust z-score technique to detect excessively large variations between the individual laboratory and the overall consensus.

A final report, summarising the information submitted by all of the participants can be viewed on the PTA website at the conclusion of each round of the program. A summary sheet is also sent to each individual participant at the conclusion of the program. This summary sheet details the performance of that laboratory in the program.

Confidentiality

Each participating laboratory is assigned a code number to allow for confidential treatment of results in all reports and publications produced by PTA. Please refer to the PTA website (http://www.pta.asn.au/pta_Confidentiality) for more information.

Fees

Refer to the current PTA fee schedule available on the PTA website (www.pta.asn.au/pta_Schedules)

Further Information

For further information on the Carcass Hygiene Program contact ptaenquiry@pta.asn.au