



PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM

NON-PATHOGENS IN FOOD

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 aim of the Non-Pathogens in Food program is to test each participant's capability in the enumeration of a range of non-pathogens in food samples.

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 Non-Pathogens in Food program consists of two rounds per year.

Participants receive a set of two food samples and are asked to test these for Standard Plate Count, as well as the enumeration of Coliforms, *E. coli*, Thermophiles, Thermophilic Spores, Yeasts and Moulds.

Participants are asked to analyse the samples and to indicate the methods they used. Robust z-scores are used to analyse the results submitted by participants. The results for each test are not pooled before analysis. Instead, the results for a particular test are analysed by method used. Results for a particular test, using a particular method, may not be analysed if the number of participants who report results using that method is too small.

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 Non-Pathogens in Food Program contact ptaenquiry@pta.asn.au