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# PROTOCOL



Combined EURL-*Salmonella* Proficiency test PPS-Food 2022  
Detection of *Salmonella* in hygiene swab samples

## Introduction

This protocol describes the procedures for the combined Proficiency Test (PT) PPS-Food 2022 on the detection of *Salmonella* spp. in matrix amongst the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) for *Salmonella* in the EU. The samples consist of hygiene swab samples contaminated with background flora and different concentrations of *Salmonella* spp.

**Note that the samples are transported with cooling packs and need to be stored at 5°C on arrival.**

The prescribed method is EN ISO 6579-1:2017/A1:2020 (Microbiology of the food chain - Horizontal method for the detection, enumeration and serotyping of *Salmonella* - Part 1: Detection of *Salmonella* spp.). Additionally, laboratories (that are interested) can also perform a second detection method to analyse the sample, if this is (routinely) used in their laboratories. Only the results obtained with EN ISO 6579-1:2017/A1:2020 are used to assess the performance of the NRL. Please report relevant details of the method(s) used in the result form. Note that the hygiene swabs are moisture with 10 ml peptone physiological salt solution; adding **90 ml** of buffered peptone water will result in the primary dilution.

## Objective

The main objective of the Proficiency Test is to evaluate the performance of the NRLs for *Salmonella* on their ability to detect *Salmonella* spp. at different contamination levels in hygiene swab samples.

## Outline of the study

Each participant will receive one box containing two large plastic safety bags, packed with cooling elements. The plastic safety bags contain 16 numbered plastic bags, consisting of:

- 14 samples with hygiene swab samples artificially contaminated with background flora and different levels of *Salmonella* (coded **B1-B14**);

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- 2 sterile hygiene swab samples to be used for the control samples, being only BPW (coded **C1**), and the (own) positive control of the participating laboratory (coded **C2**).
  - 1 sample bag containing a small electronic temperature recorder (coded with lab code)

**Upon arrival: all samples have to be stored at 5 °C (± 3 °C) until the day of analyses (3 October 2022).**

The sample bag containing the small electronic temperature recorder will measure the temperature during transport to the laboratory and storage of the samples at the laboratory. The EURL *Salmonella* uses the temperature profile to judge the quality of the received samples. The sample bag with the recorder is coded with your lab code. **You are urgently requested to return this complete plastic bag with temperature recorder and lab code to the EURL-*Salmonella*, on the day your laboratory starts the study (3 October 2022).** For this purpose, a return envelope with a preprinted address label of the EURL-*Salmonella* is included.

Each box will be sent as a biological substance category B (UN3373) by door-to-door (for non-EU-MS sometimes door-to-airport) courier service DHL. Please contact EURL-*Salmonella* if the parcel has not arrived at your laboratory by 29 September 2022 (this is three working days after the day of dispatch).

The performance of the study will start on Monday 3 October 2021.

The documents necessary for performing the study are:

- Protocol combined EURL *Salmonella* Proficiency test PPS-Food 2022. Detection of *Salmonella* spp. in hygiene swab samples (this document);
- EN ISO 6579-1:2017/A1:2020. Microbiology of the food chain - Horizontal method for the detection, enumeration and serotyping of *Salmonella* - Part 1: Detection of *Salmonella* spp.

All data must be reported through the result form. The link, which will also become available on the EURL-*Salmonella* website will be sent by email to the participants. Submission of data has to be finalised on **4 November 2022** (23:59 h CET) at the latest. **Remember that the electronic result form is no longer accessible after this deadline!** If you foresee problems meeting the deadline, please contact us in advance. The EURL will prepare a summary report soon after the study to inform all NRLs about their individual and overall results.

# Timetable



Combined EURL-*Salmonella* PT Primary Production Stage - Food 2022  
Detection of *Salmonella* in hygiene swab samples

Week	Date	Subject
27-35		E-mailing the link to the registration form for the detection study. Please <b>register by 31 August 2022</b> at the latest.
39		E-mailing the link for the result form to the participants. E-mailing the protocol and instructions for the result form to the NRLs. Preparation of media by the NRLs.
39	Monday 26 September 2022	Shipment of the parcels to the participants as Biological Substance Category B (UN 3373).
40	Monday 3 October 2022	Performance of the Proficiency Test.
44	4 November 2022 at the latest	Deadline for completing the result form: <b>4 November 2022</b> (23:59h CET) After this deadline the result form will be closed.
	December 2022	Interim summary report

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