



PROTOCOL

Combined EURL-*Salmonella* PT ILS PPS-Food 2024

Detection of *Salmonella* in fabric swab samples

Introduction

This protocol describes the procedures for the combined Proficiency Test (PT) – Interlaboratory Study (ILS) Primary Production Stage (PPS)-Food 2024 on the detection of *Salmonella* spp. in fabric swabs amongst the National Reference Laboratories (NRLs) for *Salmonella* in the EU. The samples consist of fabric swabs contaminated with background flora and different concentrations of *Salmonella* spp.

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 fabric swab samples. Additionally, the results will be used to determine the performance characteristics of ISO 6579-1 for detection of *Salmonella* in environmental samples from the food or feed production (ILS part of the study).

Outline of the study

Samples

Each participant will receive one box containing one large plastic safety bag, packed with cooling elements. The plastic safety bag contains:

- 16 numbered plastic bags, consisting of fabric swab samples artificially contaminated with background flora and different levels of *Salmonella* (coded B1-B16);
- 1 sample bag containing a small electronic temperature recorder (coded with your lab code).

The temperature recorder will measure the temperature during transport to the laboratory and storage of the samples at your laboratory. The EURL-*Salmonella* uses the temperature profile to assess the quality of the received samples. **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. 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 your parcel has not arrived at your laboratory by 2 October 2024 (this is two working days after the day of dispatch).

Note that we will not send control sample bags any more since accredited laboratories are expected to include (process) control samples according to their own Standard Operating Procedure and quality system. Information will be requested through the result form about the laboratory control samples used.

Analyses of the samples

Unlike previous PTs, the performance of this PT will not start one week after dispatch of the samples, but will start on **Wednesday 2 October 2024**. In case your parcel has not arrived on Wednesday you can start as soon as your parcel arrives at your laboratory, but preferably no later than Monday 7 October 2024. If you need to store the samples, please do so at 5 °C (± 3 °C) until you start the analyses and keep the temperature recorder with the samples during storage.

The prescribed method for detection of *Salmonella* is EN ISO 6579-1:2017(/A1:2020) and the underlying EN ISO documents, e.g. the EN ISO 6887 series for preparation of test samples.

Additionally, laboratories (that are interested) can also perform a second detection method to analyse the sample, if this is (routinely) used in their laboratories. These results can be reported in addition to the results of the prescribed method in the result form. Please report relevant details of the method(s) used in the result form. Only the results obtained with EN ISO 6579-1:2017(/A1:2020) are used to assess the performance of the NRL.

The documents necessary for performing the study are:

- Protocol combined EURL *Salmonella* PT ILS PPS-Food 2024. Detection of *Salmonella* spp. in fabric swab samples (this document);
- EN ISO 6579-1:2017. Microbiology of the food chain - Horizontal method for the detection, enumeration and serotyping of *Salmonella* - Part 1: Detection of *Salmonella* spp.
- 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. - Amendment 1 Broader range of incubation temperatures, amendment to the status of Annex D, and correction of the composition of MSRV and SC.

All results and relevant details of the method used have to be reported using the result form, available through the following link:

https://www.formdesk.com/rivm/Results_form_EURL_Salm_PT_PPS_Food_2024

Note that due to the fact that this PT ILS results will also be used to determine performance characteristics of EN ISO 6579-1 for detection of *Salmonella* in environmental samples, information about the method and materials used, is asked in great detail.

Please use a separate result form for each lab code if you perform the analyses as NRL PPS and NRL Food. Submission of data has to be finalised on **1 November 2024** (23:59 h CET) at the latest. **Remember that the 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.

In case of deviating results, the EURL-*Salmonella* may ask for additional information or to perform additional tests. Therefore, we ask you to conserve (at least) one *Salmonella* confirmed colony from each positive sample (B1-B16), as well as of the positive control.

Timetable



EURL-*Salmonella* combined PT ILS Primary and Food 2024. Detection of *Salmonella* in fabric swabs.

Production Stage

Week	Date	Subject
28-35		E-mailing the link to the registration form for the Proficiency Test. Please register by 31 August 2024 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.
40	Monday 30 September 2024	Shipment of the parcels to the participants as Biological Substance Category B (UN 3373).
40	Wednesday 2 October 2024	Start performance of the combined PT-ILS PPS-Food.
44	Friday 1 November at the latest	Deadline for completing the result form: 1 November 2024 (23:59h CET) After this deadline the result form will be closed.
	December 2024	Interim summary report

If you have questions or remarks about this Proficiency Test, please contact:

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