



Department of  
**Agriculture,  
Food and the Marine**

An Roinn  
**Talmhaíochta,  
Bia agus Mara**

## **DAFM Proficiency Testing Scheme-Mastitis bacterial identification (culture and/or PCR)**

### **Terms and conditions**

#### **Participation in the proficiency testing scheme:**

- Limerick RVL will continue to send proficiency test (PT) samples to any private labs that participated in the pilot PT scheme in the previous year.
- A lab that has not previously participated, or has withdrawn from the PT scheme at any point, can request to participate again by contacting Alan Johnson in Limerick RVL. Participation can commence with the next round of samples that are issued.
- If PT results are not received by Limerick RVL by the requested date (indicated with the samples) then the lab will be considered to have withdrawn from the PT scheme.
- Labs participating in the PT scheme coordinated by DAFM will also be expected to provide DAFM with the results of all bacteria identified from milk samples received commercially, for the purposes of national surveillance. The information currently required for each sample tested commercially will be:
  - A unique sample identifier, assigned by the lab
  - Test date
  - Bacteria identified (to species level, where possible)
  - Results of related susceptibility-testing, if carried out
- These results will be returned to Limerick RVL on a quarterly basis, on a standardised spreadsheet provided by DAFM. Returns should be completed at the same time as the results of the PT samples are being returned to Limerick RVL.
- Labs will be expected to participate in both parts of the PT scheme (**PT1 & PT2**), if they are offering these services commercially.

#### **PT1-Identification of bacterial species in milk samples:**

- Milk samples for mastitis bacterial identification as part of the PT scheme will be issued 4 times a year, on a quarterly basis.
- Sample handling and identification of bacteria in the milk samples will be carried out as per routine laboratory procedures.

- Results will be returned to Limerick RVL, in the required format, within 3 weeks of receiving the samples.

#### **PT2-Antimicrobial susceptibility proficiency testing:**

- Milk samples containing bacteria for antimicrobial susceptibility testing as part of the PT scheme will be issued 4 times a year, on a quarterly basis.
- Sample handling and antimicrobial susceptibility testing will be carried out as per routine laboratory procedures.
- Results will be returned to Limerick RVL, in the required format, within 3 weeks of receiving the samples.

#### **Successful participation:**

##### **PT1:**

- Results will be scored on a point system-1 point will be awarded for correct identification of the bacteria present in each sample to genus level, and 1 point for correct identification to species level. Thus the maximum score for each bacteria present is 2 points.
- The maximum score possible for each round of PT1 is 'number of bacteria included' \* 2. For example, if 4 milk samples are issued, one containing 2 bacteria and the other 3 containing 1 bacterium, the maximum score possible is 10.
- Achieving at least 80% of the maximum possible score will be considered as successful completion of that round of PT1.
- If a lab achieves a score <80% on a PT1 round, they will be contacted by Limerick RVL, to provide assistance in identifying the reason and possible solutions.

##### **PT2:**

- Performance scores will not yet be assigned to the results of PT2, but expected results and performance reports will be reported back to the participating labs. This is subject to change in the future, and participating labs will be notified in advance of any proposed changes.

**These terms and conditions will be reviewed on an annual basis, in consultation with PT scheme participants and CellCheck Technical Working Group members. DAFM reserves the right to modify the terms and conditions of this PT scheme from time to time, in order to support national disease surveillance and on-farm decision-making in mastitis control.**

*Updated: 19/5/2020*