

Appendix D – Additional Information/References for Proficiency Testing

- Proficiency testing (PT) has become an essential aspect of quality control in diagnostic testing laboratories. Proficiency testing needs will vary according to an individual laboratory's testing scopes, size of the laboratory, and the number of different methods used by the testing laboratory. The common goal of proficiency test is to compare results on a panel of well characterized homogenous samples obtained by one laboratory with those obtained by different laboratories on a panel of well characterized homogenous samples where all panels are distributed simultaneously by an independent PT coordinating body to the testing laboratories. After completion of testing the results are returned to the PT coordinating body, which is responsible for comparing all submitted results against the expected results for each sample.
- AFS-FHS QA Committee recognizes that it is not possible to have a single approach for every testing need (bacteriology, parasitology, and virology) or for all methods. Currently, there are no established sources of homogenous fish pathogens or commercial services which provide proficiency testing services for the wide array of fish pathogens which are commonly regulated. However, AFS-FHS Tier-II Laboratories must establish a schedule and method to document how they evaluate the competency and proficiency of laboratory methods outlined in their quality management system.
- Proficiency testing might also include:
 - Regular use of certified reference materials or internal quality controls
 - Tracking control test data to monitor changes in test performance over time.
 - Replicate test on the same sample, retesting of archived samples
 - Correlation of test results between testing methods