



AHL Milk Bacteriology In-Clinic Laboratory Proficiency Program

The purpose of the Milk Bacteriology In-Clinic Laboratory Proficiency Program is to provide an external quality assurance program for assessing and monitoring laboratory methods in veterinary practice laboratories for the diagnosis of bovine intramammary infections. This program will provide self-assessment for in-clinic staff. Improved laboratory quality assurance will ensure accurate and appropriate bovine mastitis diagnoses and improve client confidence.

How to participate:

1. **Enroll in the proficiency program:** Contact AHL's Client Outreach Technician (COT), Josie Given, to enroll and arrange an initial visit to your clinic. (jgiven@uoguelph.ca, ahlinfo@uoguelph.ca 519-824-4120 ext 54320 or 54530.) During the visit Josie will work with clinic laboratory staff to assess laboratory set up, record keeping, and protocols for milk bacteriology. These will be reviewed using standardized quality assurance protocols.

2. Conduct the in-house quality assurance program:

Every 3 months for 1 year (or customized intervals, no less than 2x/year), the COT will contact identified clinic staff, to request submission of bovine milk samples (individual quarter samples only) to both the clinic's in-house bacterial culture for bovine mastitis and to the AHL Mastitis Bacteriology Laboratory. Four samples will be selected and split: 1 set of 4 will be submitted immediately to the AHL (***please use the AHL Milk Bacteriology Laboratory Proficiency submission form***) and the other set of 4 will be subjected to in-clinic culture.

Once the in-clinic testing is completed, record your results and send to the AHL at the following email address: ahlinfo@uoguelph.ca.

3. **Feedback and Reporting** - In collaboration with the AHL Milk Bacteriology lab professional staff, the COT will review the referring lab's results compared to the AHL results and provide a confidential comparative report to the clinic's staff. Any discrepancies will be noted and discussed. Laboratory guidelines and recommendations will be provided to the in-clinic lab staff to improve performance and accuracy when indicated.

4. If desired, subsequent visits to your clinic laboratory can be arranged to further assess protocols and procedures.

5. A Certificate of Participation is provided to all program enrollees.

Josie Given
Client Outreach Technician

Jim Fairles
Client Services Veterinarian