

Resolutions of the 5th workshop of Microbiological NRLs for Bivalve Molluscs, Weymouth, UK, 7-9th March, 2006

Proficiency testing

1. NRLs agreed to maintain commitment to the CRL/HPA EQA as the primary means of proficiency testing for *E.coli* and *Salmonella* spp. amongst the NRL network.
2. Most NRLs had made good progress towards in country testing laboratory proficiency testing, NRLs resolved that at the next workshop reports on testing laboratory performance should be provided.
3. The workshop agreed that the CRL should organise a further ring trial for FRNA bacteriophage and that the scheme would be open to in country testing laboratories with an interest in testing FRNA bacteriophage in bivalve molluscs and other samples. NRLs would advise the CRL of laboratories wishing to participate.
4. The workshop agreed that in the absence of an internationally accepted reference method for viruses the CRL should organise a further ring trial for detection of NoV/HAV in laboratory constructed samples only.
5. The workshop agreed to continue with *V. parahaemolyticus* ring trial for detection, and determination of pathogenicity principles, and if possible enumeration, using the methods of the laboratories own choice.

Microbiological monitoring

6. NRLs endorsed the output of the good practice guide and recognised it as a very valuable guidance document for NRLs and others. The full version will be published on the CRL website.
7. It was agreed that a simplified version of the above guide should be produced for comment by NRLs then submitted for endorsement to the standing committee of member states prior to publication on the Commission website.
8. NRLs resolved to inform competent authorities in their countries of the content of the good practice guide when the final version has been endorsed.
10. The CRL agreed to organise a training workshop on sanitary surveys, participation would be invited through NRLs in 2006. It was agreed that attendance should be targeted at those responsible for conducting such surveys.

11. The CRL agreed to organise a training workshop on sampling and other issues arising from the GPG, participation would be invited through NRLs in 2006.

Legislation

12. In reference to the standards for classification of production areas in EU Regulation (EC) 854/2004, NRLs identified that scientific justification for application of tolerance based upon analytical uncertainty for category B sites applied equally to class A and C categories.

13. It was identified that effective communication and collaboration between the competent authority and NRLs was imperative. NRLs should establish mechanisms to enhance co-operation and dissemination of information to competent authorities. Progress should be reported upon at the next workshop.

Viruses

14. NRLs agreed that it was necessary to standardise methods for detection of viruses in bivalve molluscs before consideration could be given to the introduction of such methods into EU legislation.

15. NRLs supported the work of CEN/TC275/WG6/TAG4 'Viruses in food' in the development of a standard method for detection of Norovirus and Hepatitis A virus in bivalve molluscs.

16. NRLs requested that the final draft of the viruses in food method should be made available to the NRL network. The CRL resolved to make a request to the CEN WG to allow distribution of the document in final draft after the next meeting of CEN in June 2006.

17. NRLs agreed that further information is required to clarify the interpretation of PCR viral results in respect to public health consequence. NRLs supported the continuation of studies to progress interpretation of PCR positive results.

Depuration

18. NRLs re-endorsed the formation of an EU WG to elaborate a good practice guide covering all aspects of commercial depuration practices in order to facilitate harmonisation across Europe with respect to removal of bacteriological contamination. The CRL agreed to communicate this to the Commission.