



## MODULE 6F

### PROFICIENCY TESTING (PT) AND ROUND ROBIN PROGRAMS FOR FOOD LABORATORIES

#### 6F.1 PARTICIPATION

All laboratories pursuing/maintaining accreditation in the Food Laboratory Accreditation Program (FoodLAP) shall participate in an AIHA-LAP, LLC-approved proficiency testing program, as defined by *Appendix D - FoodLAP Scope/PT Table* maintained on the AIHA-LAP, LLC web site ([www.aihaaccreditedlabs.org](http://www.aihaaccreditedlabs.org)). Laboratory accreditation for each Field of Testing (FoT) shall be defined by the extent of participation in an AIHA-LAP, LLC-approved proficiency testing program. *Appendix D - FoodLAP Scope PT Table* includes a comprehensive listing of proficiency testing providers that are currently approved for use in the FoodLAP. If the laboratory utilizes multiple testing technologies (or methods) for a specific FoT, then the proficiency testing samples shall be analyzed such that the proficiency of each technology (or method) used to report sample results is evaluated at least once per year. The laboratory shall participate in quantitative proficiency testing analyses, wherever available.

Laboratories accredited under the FoodLAP shall conform to all proficiency testing requirements as outlined in this module and Module 6A.

#### 6F.2 PT FREQUENCY

**6F.2.1** To obtain or maintain accreditation for a FoT, under Chemistry and Microbiology, the laboratory shall participate in an approved, commercially available, proficiency testing program at least three (3) times per year, quarterly participation is preferred.

**6F.2.2** To obtain or maintain accreditation for a FoT, under Residue Chemistry, the laboratory shall participate in an approved proficiency testing program at least semiannually (twice per calendar year).

**6F.2.3** Results from federally required proficiency testing programs may be used toward satisfying the frequency requirement in 6F.2.1 and/or 6F.2.2.

#### 6F.3 PROFICIENCY TESTING PROVIDER APPROVAL PROCESS

All approved proficiency testing providers shall conform to ISO Guide 43-1, 43-2 and ILAC Guide 13 requirements. This may not be applicable to some Federal and State proficiency testing programs. Providers that have ISO 43 and ILAC Guide 13:8/2007 recognition shall be automatically approved by the AIHA-LAP, LLC. Other suppliers shall be audited by the AIHA-LAP, LLC to verify that the provider conforms to the requirements of ISO Guide 43.

**6F.3.1** The AAB shall approve all FoodLAP proficiency testing providers.

**6F.3.2** The AAB shall evaluate the system utilized by the proficiency testing provider to determine proficiency. The proficiency testing provider proficiency rating system shall be well defined.

**6F.3.3** Approved proficiency testing providers shall be reevaluated on a triennial basis (every three [3] years), or more frequently, as deemed necessary by the AIHA-LAP, LLC.



#### **6F.4 PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS**

FoodLAP accredited laboratories shall contract independently with an AIHA-LAP, LLC-approved proficiency testing provider. The proficiency testing results shall be provided to AIHA-LAP, LLC by the laboratory pursuing/maintaining accreditation within ten (10) business days after the report of results has been received from the proficiency testing provider. Failure to meet this requirement may directly impact the laboratory's proficiency rating. The proficiency testing report provided shall contain adequate information to make a determination on FoT proficiency in accordance with stated criteria.

#### **6F.5 PT SCORING**

Proficiency testing scoring is described in 6F.5.1 through 6F.5.4 and utilizes the "Z scores" supplied by the proficiency testing providers. Based upon recommendations from the AAB, AIHA-LAP, LLC may utilize a different proficiency rating scheme from that described if the challenge samples do not readily conform to a Z score evaluation scheme. Laboratories that become non-proficient for any FoT shall adhere to the procedures outlined in Module 3, Section 3.8.2.

**6F.5.1** A value of one (1) is assigned to proficiency testing sample result with a Z score of less than or equal to two (2).

**6F.5.2** A value of zero (0) is assigned to proficiency testing sample result with a Z score of greater than two (2).

**6F.5.3** A laboratory must have values of one (1) for 100% of all proficiency testing sample results in the last two (2) consecutive proficiency testing rounds or 75% of all proficiency testing sample results in the last four (4) consecutive proficiency testing rounds to be rated proficient for the corresponding FoT.

**6F.5.4** For a foodborne pathogen FoT, under Microbiology, the laboratory must have values of one (1) for 100% of all proficiency testing sample results in the last two (2) consecutive proficiency testing rounds to be rated proficient for the corresponding FoT.