NQAC
Nestlé Quality Assurance Center

TECHNICAL FAQS

Do you have questions regarding microbiology or chemistry testing or results? Our most frequently asked questions can be found below. If the answer to your question cannot be found below, or you need further clarification, please contact Customer Service at nqacdublincustomerservice@us.nestle.com.

Microbiology

How long are wet swabs viable?

Due to the limited viability of the microbes environmental swab and water samples are viable for 24-36 hours after sampling. Samples received after this time range will be considered compromised.

Why is my result <20 instead of <10?

This sample matrix was found to have inhibitory or thickening properties. To receive valid results testing needed to be completed at a higher dilution.

What does the "est" on my report mean?

Our method has a range for which results are validated. If the result is under the readable range, your report will have the "est" next to the result.

Can you use pooled or composite samples for general microbiology analyses (i.e. APC, EB, E. coli)?

No, this is in direct conflict with Nestle LI-00.765, section 8.1.1: "Laboratory samples that have been sent for quantitative testing must not be pooled." When testing is performed on pooled samples, it is not a true reflection of the individual results and there is a risk of under-reporting with such data.

TECHNICAL FAQS

How can I find out how many replicates will be needed for my microbiology sample that needs a different dilution?

Please see below for dilution conversions for commonly requested dilution factors. This information should be provided to you by Customer Service depending on the matrix being tested.

		Weight								
		25g	100g	125g	150g	250g	325g	375g	750g	1500g
Dilution	1:10	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	4
	1:20	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	5	10
	1:100	1	4	5	6	10	13	15	30	60
	1:200	2	10	10	10	25	26	25	50	100
	1:500	5	20	25	30	50	65	75	150	300
	1:1000	10	40	50	60	100	130	150	300	600
	1:2000	25	100	125	150	250	325	375	750	1500
	1:3000	25	100	125	150	250	325	375	750	1500

Chemistry

What is included when I request rush for chemistry testing?

Rush testing turnaround time provides expedited testing and results release. Rush testing will result in a charge that is 2x the cost of the methods being requested as rush. Please note that not all methods have rush testing turnaround times available. Please contact Customer Service to inquire which methods have rush turnaround times available.

TECHNICAL FAQS

What does “Not Determinable” mean?

Not Determinable is used for a component of an analysis when we have an interference from the sample matrix and cannot derive a definitive result for that specific compound. The possible reasons for this type of interference could arise from the sample itself or from additives to the sample.

Why does my final report show multiple results for the same test when I only requested that the test be completed once?

In most cases, the additional results for a test will be listed when your sample contained a detectable component in your requested analysis. The second test is the confirmation test that was completed by NQAC to ensure the accuracy of the original set of results. This may also occur when a compound is detected that might be volatile. In this case, the test is repeated in duplicate to confirm the original result. If the variability of the three results is within the uncertainty of the method, all three results are provided on the final report.

How can I ensure that the Limits of Quantification (QL) that I need for testing are achieved?

Please contact Customer Service for more information regarding the Limits of Quantification for our methods. Please note that due to sample matrix, the QL that we are able to achieve may vary. Once the confirmed QL is provided, please place the required levels in the “estimated levels” column of the analysis request form.

How do I receive allergen swabs from NQAC and how do I collect them?

To receive allergen swabs for testing, please contact grpCSNdub@us.nestle.com and NQACALLERGENS@internal.nestle.com for assistance. Additionally, information regarding the allergen swab collection process can be found in the allergen swab collection document.

TECHNICAL FAQS

How do I submit packaging samples to NQAC Dublin for testing?

Please contact CS to determine the amount of material that will need to be submitted for testing. To prevent loss of analytes ensure that the samples are wrapped in at least two layers of aluminum foil prior to submission. It is also recommended that a separate sample be submitted for each analysis requested to ensure that your samples can be processed in a timely fashion.

Can light and/or air affect the results of vitamin analyses?

Many vitamins degrade in the presence of light and oxygen. To maintain accurate results, samples intended for vitamins testing should be submitted in a container that protects the sample from light and air.

What is the difference between limit of detection and limit of quantification?

The limit of detection represents the lowest level that a method can detect, but not accurately quantify, of a compound. The limit of quantification represents the lowest limit that can be quantified for a method and remain within the acceptable accuracy of the method. Since the detection limit offers no actionable information, only the limit of quantification (QL) is reported.

Why does the limit of quantification (QL) differ for different sample matrices?

Each sample type is spiked at the QL to ensure that we can detect the compound, however not all compounds interact well with all sample matrices. If the compound can still be detected, but the recovery is lower than our quality criteria, the QL is raised to the level that corresponds to the confidence of detection.

Why is the turnaround time longer when there is a detection in my sample?

Confirmation testing is completed on any possibly volatile detection found for a sample. A new aliquot of the original sample is tested to ensure that the detection found is not a “false positive”. The extended turnaround time is used to confirm the original result found.

If confirmation testing is needed, is this additional testing included in the price of the pesticides screen?

The duplicate confirmation analysis is performed at no additional cost for this method.

TECHNICAL FAQS

What does the phrase ‘uncertainty of the method’ mean?

The uncertainty of the method corresponds to the acceptable degree of variation for the method. Most compounds have an method uncertainty that corresponds to the SANCO normal 40%.