

Review of plates

Counting *E. coli* colonies on Petrifilms can be quite subjective. How blue is blue? Are there really bubbles? How much of a colony overlaps the edge? How high is TNTC (Too Numerous To Count)? When is the background purple enough to declare TNTC?

For all these reasons, we need multiple eyes reviewing each set of plates before we publish data from them. This review does not have to take long, once we get used to doing it routinely.

1. Once you have uploaded your plate pictures,
 - a. Email to wwals-testing@googlegroups.com (the testing list)
 - b. With a new Subject that reflects what your plates measure (date, locations)
 - c. And in the body of the message include your counts for each plate and your proposed results for each location, as in 1 + 2 + 1 for 133 cfu/100 mL.
 - d. Also include in the email message a link to the date folder.
2. Other testers:
 - a. Please review each new set of plate pictures, see if you agree with the counts, and reply to the above message in wwals-testing@googlegroups.com with your opinion, even if it is just “I agree with the original tester’s interpretation.”
 - b. If you find anything that could be otherwise interpreted, *it is very important to reply with your interpretation and why.*
 - c. We need *at least two responses from testers other than the original tester.*
 - d. If there is any difference of opinion, discuss on the testing list until there is agreement.
3. If there is any difference of opinion about interpretation of a given set of plates for a location and date, it must be resolved before publication.
 - a. If there are three identical interpretations (the original tester plus two others) and no others, that is resolved.
 - b. It helps if the testing Committee Chair declares a resolution, even if it is just “everybody agrees.”
 - c. If necessary, a WWALS trainer can declare a resolution.
 - d. If there is no resolution, we do **NOT** publish the data.
 - e. However, **most of the time, everybody agrees, usually quickly.**
4. Once there is agreement or a declared interpretation, unless there is some really important and unusual reason, *please do not change the result.*

Comparison to other sources of data

Partly due to years of examples set by WWALS, not to mention nagging, we have a plethora of other bacterial data to compare, and sometimes even chemical tracers and DNA markers.

For where to find the latest Valdosta and Florida data, see: <http://wwals.net/issues/testing/>

1. Supposedly the Valdosta data are also in Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, where we do put WWALS data as each location and data is confirmed by the above review: <https://aas.gaepd.org/Group.aspx?ID=1727>
2. As quickly as we can, we also put all this data into the WWALS composite spreadsheet, along with rainfall and sewage spill data: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1I_W-IB8Sfe04UKdO5ufexq3OVMYG_0eBIEDX0gixJ-O/view?usp=sharing
3. WWALS updates Swim Guide with the results from other sources. <https://www.theswimguide.org/search/?q=withlacochee>

Volunteers needed help update the WWALS composite spreadsheet and Swim Guide.