

NF VALIDATION
Validation of alternative analytical methods
Application in food microbiology

Summary report

Validation study according to the EN ISO 16140-2:2016

iQ-Check *E. coli* O157:H7

(Certificate number: BRD 07/15 - 06/08)

**for the detection of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7
in raw meats**

Qualitative method

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This report consists of 69 pages, including 7 appendices.

Only copies including the totality of this report are authorised.

Competencies of the laboratory are certified by COFRAC accreditation for the analyses marked with the symbol♦.

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Quality Assurance documents related to this study can be consulted upon request from **BIO-RAD**.

The technical protocol and the result interpretation were carried out according to the EN ISO 16140-2:2016 and the AFNOR technical rules (PR Revision 7).

Validation protocols	☒ ISO 16140-1 (2016): Microbiology of the food chain - Method validation — <i>Part 1: Vocabulary</i> ☒ ISO 16140-2(2016): Microbiology of the food chain - Method validation — <i>Part 2: Protocol for the validation of alternative (proprietary) methods against a reference method</i> ☒ AFNOR technical rules (PR Revision 7)
Reference method[♦]	☒ ISO 16654 (May 2001): Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs - Horizontal method for the detection of <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 ☒ ISO 16654 (May 2011): Microbiology of food and animal feeding stuffs - Horizontal method for the detection of <i>Escherichia coli</i> O157 - Amendment 1 (March 2017): annex B: result of inter-laboratory studies
Alternative method	iQ-Check <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7
Scope	Raw meats (25 g test portion and 375 g test portion)
Certification organism	AFNOR Certification (http://nf-validation.afnor.org/)

[♦] Analyses performed according to the COFRAC accreditation

1 INTRODUCTION

The iQ-Check *E. coli* O157:H7 method was validated on the 30th of June 2008 (certificate number BRD 07/15 - 06/08) for detection of *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 in raw beef meats according to the ISO 16140 (2003).

A summary of the extension and renewal studies is given in the table below:

June 2008	Initial validation study Raw beef meats (25 g test portion): BPW 8-24 h at 41,5°C
September 2008	Extension study for a new enrichment protocol: BPW for 21 h $\pm$ 1 h at 37°C
January 2009	Extension study New version of the Opticon Monitor™ software
February 2010	Extension study: - Use of deepwell plates for lysis step - Use of the CFX96 Deep Well system with the CFX Manager™ software - Use of the Mini Opticon™ with the CFX Manager™
March 2012	Extension: Use of the CFX96 Deep Well system and the CFX Manager IDE V1.2 software
May 2012	Renewal
March 2013	Extension: Use of the CFX Manager™ Software IDE version 2.0 and the iQ-Check Prep
October 2013	Extension: Use of the CFX Manager™ Software IDE version 2.1 and the iQ-Check Prep
November 2014	Extension: Use of the CFX Manager™ Software IDE version 2.2 and the iQ-Check Prep v2
March 2016	Renewal
May 2018	Extension: Use of the CFX Manager™ Software IDE version 3.0 and the iQ-Check Prep v3

October 2020	Renewal and extension study ▪ Only the protocol initially validated was kept for the renewal study with an extension of the scope to raw meats for two tests portions (25 g and 375 g) and a restriction of the incubation range from 8 - 24 h to 8 - 16 h for 25 g test portion. ▪ The extension also concerns the use of a new Application Protocol File (APF). The classical iQ-Check APF (Application Protocol File) corresponds to a 1h50 min PCR run. Some optimization (reduction of the number of cycles + time reduction of some steps) led to release the APF Fast for iQ-Check methods to reduce the PCR run time down to 1h10 min without impact on the performances (sensitivity and specificity).
December 2022	Extension for the use of the CFX Opus Deepwell (the data corresponding to this study are available from AFNOR Certification)

2 METHOD PROTOCOLS

2.1 Alternative method

The flow diagram of the alternative method is provided in **Appendix 1**.

The iQ-Check *E. coli* O157:H7 kit is a test based on gene amplification and detection by real-time PCR. Ready-to-use PCR reagents contain oligonucleotides (primers and probes) specific *E. coli* O157:H7, as well as DNA polymerase and nucleotides. Detection and data analysis are optimized for use with a Bio-Rad real-time PCR instrument, such as the CFX96™ or the CFX96 Deepwell™ systems.

PCR is a powerful technique used to generate many copies of target DNA. During the PCR reaction, several cycles of heating and cooling allow DNA denaturation, by heat, followed by primers binding to the target region. The DNA polymerase then uses these primers and deoxynucleotide triphosphates (dNTPs) to extend the DNA, creating copies of the target DNA. These copies are called amplicons.

This test allows the detection of *E. coli* O157:H7 in raw meats previously enriched by culture in pre-warmed Buffered peptone water. It includes the following 4 main steps:

- Enrichment;
- DNA extraction;
- Real-time PCR;
- Data analysis & interpretation.

2.1.1 Protocols

Two protocols are available (See **Table 1**).

Table 1 - Protocols

Category	Protocol	Test portion	Enrichment	Extraction	PCR
Raw meats (excluding poultry meats)	①	25 g	Pre-warmed BPW (41.5°C) 8 - 16 h at 41.5°C ± 1°C d 1/10	Easy II 100 µl Tube or Deep Well plate	APF Classic or APF Fast on 5 µl DNA extract
	②	375 g	Pre-warmed BPW (41.5°C) 10 - 18 h at 41.5°C ± 1°C d 1/4	Easy II 100 µl Tube or Deep Well plate	APF Fast on 5 µl DNA extract

The PCR is performed on 5 µl DNA extract. Two APF files are available:

- APF Classic (1h50 PCR run) for protocol ①
- APF Fast (1h10 PCR run) for protocols ① & ②.

The confirmation of positive PCR results is performed as follows:

- By streaking 10 µl enriched sample onto CT-SMAC (18-24 h at 37°C) or RAPID'E.coli O157:H7 (24h ± 2h at 37°C);
- By proceeding to an IMS step before streaking 50 µl of immunobeads suspension onto CT-SMAC or RAPID'E.coli O157:H7.

The typical colonies (1 to 3) are confirmed by O157 and H7 latex tests after subculture onto non-selective agar.

It is possible to store the enrichment broths for 72 h at 5°C ± 3°C for protocol 2 only (375g test portion).

2.1.2 Restriction

3.1.1.1 Number and nature of samples

The artificial contaminations are presented in **Appendix 3**.

107 samples were artificially contaminated, using 31 different strains. 97 gave a positive result.

The repartition of the positive samples per inoculation protocol and inoculation level is given in **Table 3**.

Table 3 - Repartition of positive naturally and artificially contaminated samples per inoculation level

Only one naturally contaminated sample was found positive: sample 3127 (Raw beef meat) tested in 2008.

Combining the spiking and the seeding inoculation protocols, 17.3 % of the samples were contaminated between 3 and 10 CFU.

1 % of the samples was naturally contaminated.

3.1.1.3 Protocols applied during the validation study

> **Incubation times**

For each protocol, the minimum incubation time was applied:

- Raw meat (25 g): 8 h at 41.5°C;
- Raw meat (375 g): 10 h at 41.5°C.

> **Lysis step**

The Deep Well plates were used for the study (Easy II protocol).

> **PCR**

The data obtained for the validation performed in 2008, the PCR was run using the APF Classic. For this extension study (2020), only the APF Fast was used.

> **Confirmation protocols**

The following protocols were tested:

- Direct streaking onto CT-SMAC and RAPID'E. coli O157:H7;
- IMS and streaking onto CT-SMAC and RAPID'E. coli O157:H7.

The typical colonies were confirmed after subculture on non-selective agar (TCS) by O157 and H7 latex test (Remel from OXOID). An Indol test was also applied.

For samples in negative agreement, the BPW was incubated until 18 h before performing IMS and streaking onto selective agar plates.

> **Enrichment broth storage for 72 h at 5°C ± 3°C**

The enrichment broths from positive and discordant samples were tested again after storage for 72 h at 5°C ± 5°C for protocol 2 (375 g test portion).

3.1.1.4 Test results

Raw data per category are given in **Appendix 4**. The results are given in **Table 4**.

Table 4 – Interpretation of sample results between the reference and alternative method (based on the confirmed alternative method)

Category	Protocol	Type	PA	NA*	PD	ND**	PPND	PPNA	Total	
1	Raw meat 25 g	8 h Easy II APF Classic	a Chilled	12	17	2	3	0	0	34
			b Frozen	3	1	0	1	0	0	5
			c Seasoned or marinated	6	13	2	0	0	0	21
			Total	21	31	4	4	0	0	60
		8 h Easy II APF FAST	a Chilled	5	2	5	5	0	1	18
			b Frozen	3	10	0	2	0	0	15
			c Seasoned or marinated	11	3	4	3	0	0	21
			Total	19	15	9	10	0	1	54
	Total			40	46	13	14	0	1	114
	Raw meat 375 g	10 h Easy II APF FAST	a Chilled	5	9	4	2	0	0	20
			b Frozen	2	11	7	0	0	0	20
			c Seasoned or marinated	4	10	4	3	0	0	21
			Total	11	30	15	5	0	0	61
Total				51	76	28	19	0	1	175

* PPNA not included

** PPND not included

3.1.1.5 Calculation of relative trueness (RT), sensitivity (SE) and

Table 5 – Calculation of the relative trueness (RT), the sensitivity (SE) and the false positive ratio (F

A summary of the results is given in **Table 6**.

Two APF (Classic and Fast) have been tested for 25g test portions, similar results have been observed for both: 4 ND and 4 PD for APF Classic, 10 ND and 9 PD for the APF Fast.

Table 7 - Negative deviations

Table 8 - Positive deviations

The analyses of discordant results according to the EN ISO 16140-2:2016 is the following (See **Table 9**):

Table 10 - Enrichment broth storage

Best results were observed when an IMS step was carried out before streaking onto selective agar plates particularly when 375 g test portions were tested (84.6% vs 69

2 (matrix/strain) pairs were analyzed by the reference method and by the alternative method (See **Table 13**):

Table 15 - LOD₅₀ results

> Exclusivity

The strains were

3.1.5 Practicability

3.2 Inter-Laboratory Study

Table 17 - Contamination levels

3.2.3 Results analysis

Table 21 - Positive results (before and after confirmation) by the alternative

Table 22 - Positive results by the reference method (Without Labs B, K and L)

Table 24 - Percentage specificity

Table 26 - Sensitivity, relative trueness and false positive ratio percentages

it is decided whether the alternative method is regarded as not fit for purpose. The reasons for acceptance of the alternative method when the AL is not met shall be stated

3.3 General conclusion

The **inter-laboratory study conclusions** are:

**Appendix 1 – Flow diagram of the alternative method:
iQ-Check <**

Appendix 2 - Flow diagram of the reference method:
ISO

Date of analysis

Appendix 4 – Sensitivity study: raw data

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Appendix 7 – Inter-laboratory study: results

Laboratory: B
A

Laboratory: C
A

Laboratory: D
Aerobic mesophil

