

Method selection: Insist on the one that performs best on your matrices.



If you've decided that outsourcing quality and food safety tests is the best approach for your business and are now ready to begin working with your chosen lab partner, it's important to determine which method is best for your matrices.

Consider the following when selecting methods with your lab.

Insist on what works:

When you outsource, ask your contract lab to use your preferred method of testing. As the customer, your preferences should matter to your contract lab representative. After all, no one knows your company's matrices better than you do.

Sensitivity and specificity:

Accurate and reliable results are critical to your operations. It is ultimately your responsibility to produce food that is safe for consumption and of a quality your company is proud of. Ask your lab partner specific questions about which processes they use to reduce risk of errors and variability, especially in processes within their operations that are typically manual, like media preparation.

Time to result:

Sending samples to a contract lab doesn't have to mean slower time to results due to transportation time. If your contract lab isn't offering rapid methods yet, encourage them to adopt rapid testing. It's a win-win – you will receive your test results more quickly (sometimes in 24 hours depending on the test) and the contract lab will benefit from increased productivity.

Consistency:

Reducing manual steps to prepare a method is key to generating consistent results of various matrices time after time. Ask for methods with prepared media, like 3M™ Petrifilm™ Plates.

Validated for your food matrices:

If you know a method works better for your company's matrices than others, ask for it even if it is not currently used by your contract lab.

Have you considered 3M's validated methods that provide accurate, reliable and timely results?

Share 3M's validated [methods for quality indicators](#) and for 3M's validated [pathogen methods](#) with your contract lab.
