

## IMPORTANT CHANGES TO FOOD MICROBIOLOGY EQA

### Effective November 2008

From the new cycle, we are switching to the use of commercial vials containing freeze dried pellets. This has many advantages, such as increased stability, more controlled reconstitution, an increased range of organisms available, traceability to standard cultures, and more guaranteed and consistent quality. In addition, the counts will have targets and be more consistent (Follow the instructions for these new kits very carefully for information regarding the dilution of the vials to determine specific counts).

There has been no choice but to move to this new system as we are unable to continue the quality production of our previous "home-grown" products for a variety of technical reasons.

### You will have two options:

1. In future the Food Microbiology EQA will consist of a pack of twelve (12) organisms. We will call this a full pack with a cost of R5 250 for SA labs and R5 750 for non SA labs.  
You will receive two vials per month:  
Vial 1 will be an ID and a Count  
Vial 2 will be a Species ID and Present or Absent
2. The second option will be six (6) samples in a pack and will be called a half pack with a cost of R2 625 for SA labs and R3 125 for non SA labs. You will receive two vials alternatively.

The packs will cover the sections currently covered, but at the rate of two per month.

Any price increase is regretted, but there is no option in this case, as the "old" means of production is no longer an option. We hope that the many advantages will offset the increase.

We hope to see you all registered on the new cycle and trust that you will all be pleased with the new system from November 2008.

With best regards,

Dr Jim McCulloch  
30 July 2008