

NordVal International Certificate

Issued for:	RAPID' Staph
NordVal No:	049
First approval date:	20 May 2020
Renewal date:	20 May 2024
Valid until:	20 May 2026

RAPID' Staph

Supplied and manufactured by:

Bio-Rad Laboratories,
3 Blvd Raymond Poincaré,
92430 Marnes-la-Coquette,
France

fulfils the requirements of the NordVal validation protocol. The reference method was ISO 6888-1:1999/ 6888-1:2021 Horizontal method for the enumeration of coagulase-positive staphylococci (*Staphylococcus aureus* and other species). Part 1: Technique using Baird-Parker Agar medium.

NordVal International has studied the enclosures to the application and evaluated the results obtained in the validations conducted by ADRIA Développement, France in accordance with ISO 16140-2:2016. NordVal has concluded that it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that the requirements of the NordVal validation protocol are fulfilled for broad range of foods when prolonging the incubation time with additional 24h when doubtful colonies are obtained after the first 24h. The results document no statistical difference in the performances between the RAPID' Staph and the reference method.

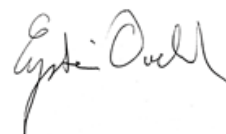
The production of the RAPID' Staph is fulfilling the requirements given in ISO 9001.

Date: 12 March 2025

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hrólfur Sigurðsson".

Hrólfur Sigurðsson
Chair of NordVal International

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eystein Oveland".

Eystein Oveland
NMKL Executive Director

PRINCIPLE OF THE METHOD

RAPID'*Staph* is based on enumeration on an optimised Baird-Parker formula for enumeration of *S. aureus* in 24 h at 37°C. Some *Staphylococcus* coagulase positive strains can give colonies with a small or without halo after 24 hours of incubation.

An additional incubation of 24 hours could be necessary to see the halo.

Using RAPID'*Staph* the typical staphylococci produce gray to black colonies that are shiny and cover (1-2 mm) with a clear 2 - 5 mm halo due to proteolysis of the egg yolk. Presumptive colonies can be confirmed using one of the following methods:

- PastorexTM Staph-Plus Latex Agglutination Test;
- Spot inoculation of Baird-Parker + RPF agar to confirm until 12 colonies on the same plate.

FIELD OF APPLICATION

The method is applicable for enumeration of coagulase-positive staphylococci (*Staphylococcus aureus* and other species) in a broad range of foods.

HISTORY

The RAPID'*Staph* method was validated first time in February 2005 for a broad range of foods and has been certified by other organisations since then.

In 2018, RAPID'*Staph* has been revalidated in order to comply with EN ISO 16140-2:2016. This is the first time RAPID'*Staph* is certified by NordVal International.

In 2025, it was concluded that the RAPID'*Staph* method would also be comparable to results obtained by the updated version of the reference method ISO 6888-1:2021.

METHOD COMPARISON STUDY

Relative trueness study

The relative trueness is illustrated by the use of a Bland-Altman plot, i.e. the difference (bias) between paired samples analysed with the reference method and the alternative method respectively, plotted against the mean values obtained by the reference method. In the plot, Upper and Lower limits are included as the bias \pm 2 times the standard deviation of the bias. The Bland-Altman Plot in **Figure 1**, illustrates the difference obtained in the enumeration of total *Staphylococcus* in foods by the alternative and the reference method, respectively. A total of 81 interpretable results from 5 food categories including composite foods (ready to eat, ready to reheat), meat products, dairy products, egg products and seafood products were obtained. The samples were both naturally and artificially contaminated.

Conclusions of the relative trueness study:

The results of the Bland-Altman Plot (**Figure 1**) provide a visual observation on the amount of bias and extreme results. It is expected that no more than one in 20 (5%) data values will lie outside the upper and lower limits. In this study, more than 5% of the results fall below the lower limit. For 9 samples, non-typical colonies were present on BP Agar plates, and confirmed positive as coagulase positive *Staphylococci* strains using the coagulase test in rabbit plasma. For these the incubation time was 24, not 48h.

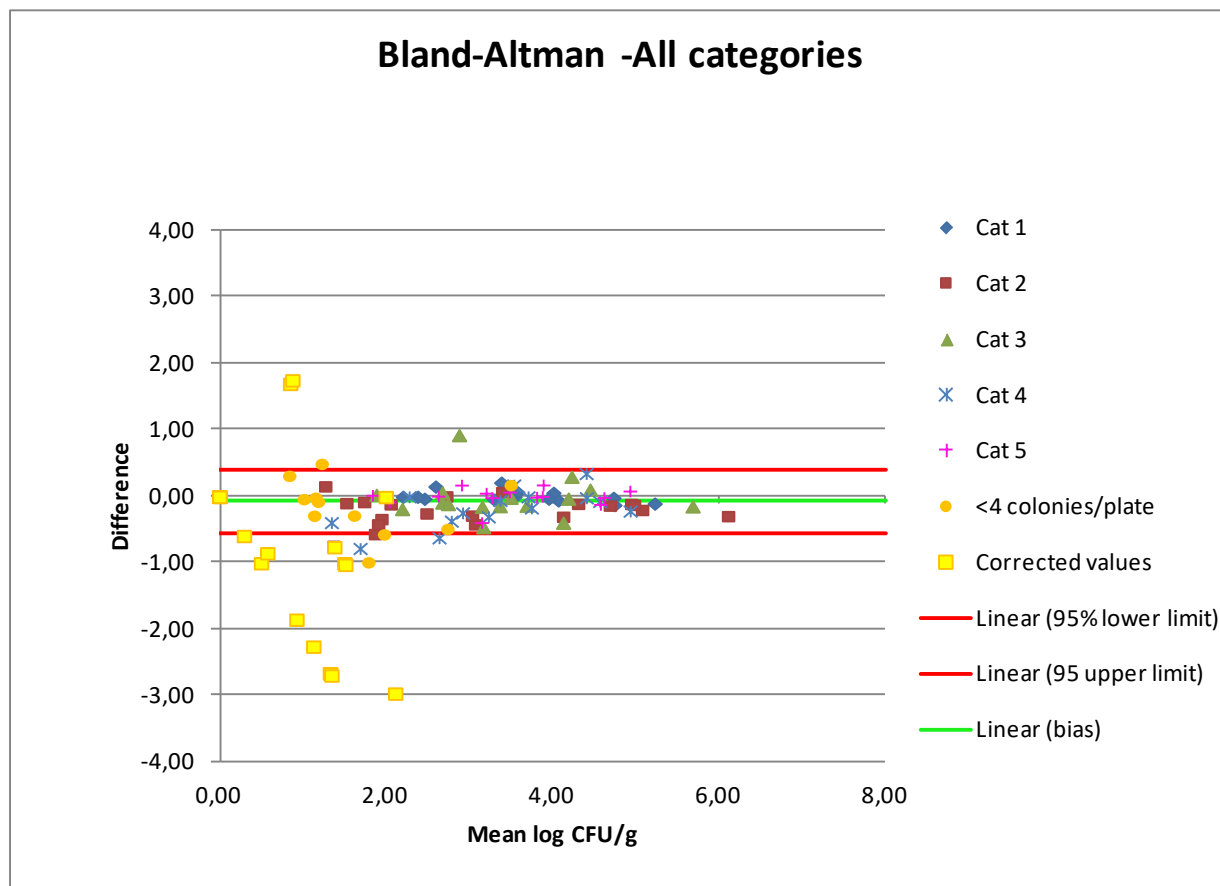


Figure 1. Bland-Altman difference plot for all categories. Comparison of reference method versus Alternative method

Accuracy profile study

The accuracy profile study is a comparative study between the results obtained by the reference and the results of the alternative method. This study is conducted using artificially contaminated samples. One type per category is tested for this.

Food matrices

For each of the 5 food categories, one type of food/sample was selected and two batches of each type were inoculated. Of 6 samples, 2 were inoculated at a low level (100 cfu/g), 2 at a medium level (5000 cfu/g) and 2 at a high level (10^5 cfu/g) of contamination. For each of the 6 samples per category and two batches of each, 5 replicate test portions were tested.

The observed profiles are within the Acceptance Limit, AL of ± 0.5 log cfu/g.

All the accuracy profiles, shown in **Figure 2**, fulfil the performance criteria and the alternative method is accepted as being equivalent to the reference method.

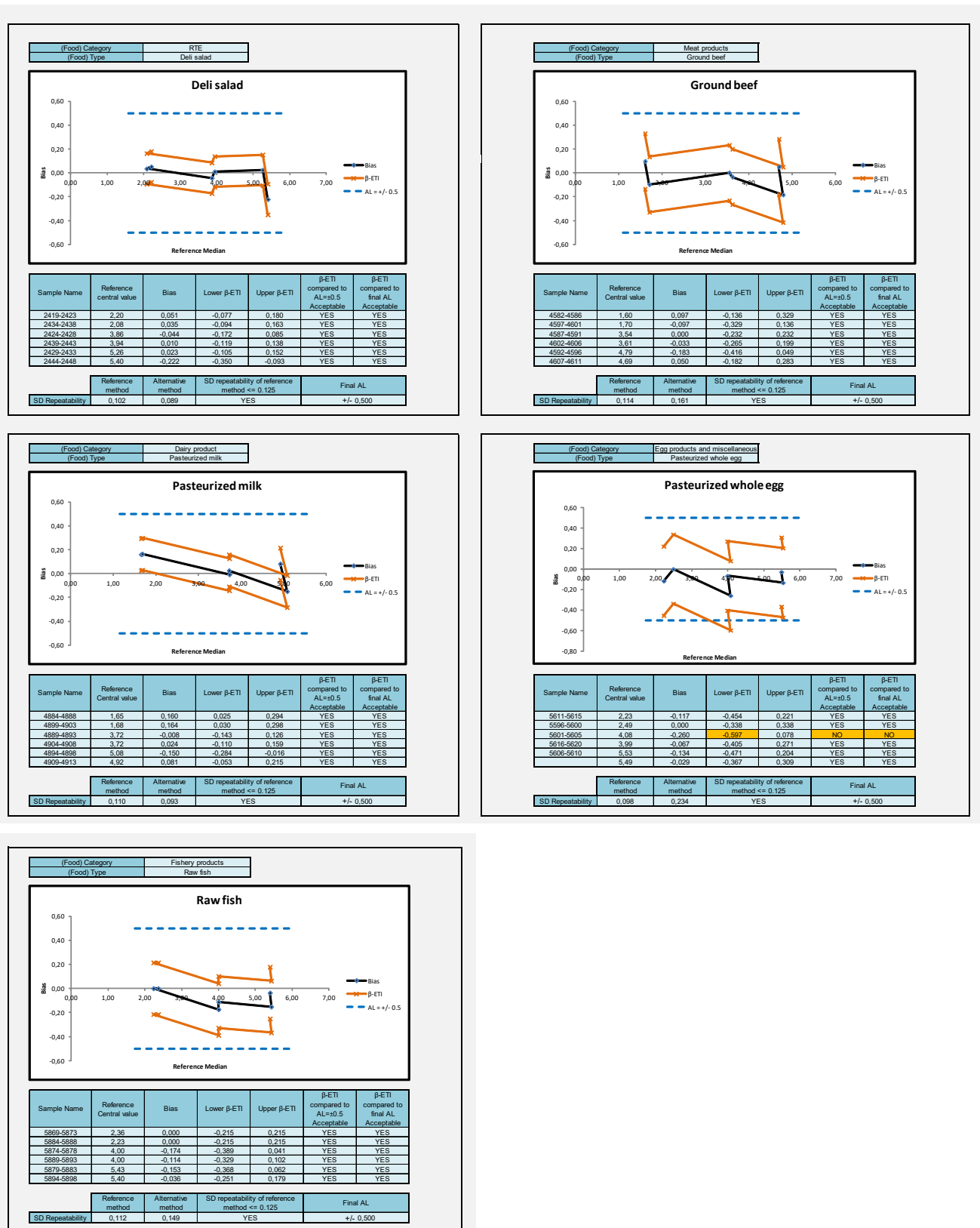


Figure 2. Accuracy profiles ($\beta = 80\%$, $AL = 0.5$)



Selectivity; Inclusivity and exclusivity

Inclusivity: 50 strains of *Staphylococcus* have been tested in two studies. 11 strains gave non characteristic colonies on RAPID'Staph Agar (without halo) and on BP agar.

For 5 of them, characteristic colonies (with halo) were obtained after 48 h incubation using BP Agar (ISO 6888-1 method) and RAPID'Staph Agar. After 48h, 6 strains gave still non-characteristic colonies, but were confirmed as coagulase positive *Staphylococcus* streins (using Rabbit plasma).

The inclusivity study shows that some *Staphylococcus* coagulase positive strains can give non-characteristic colonies after 24 hours, thus a prolongation up to 48 hours incubation time may be necessary to see the halo. If there is any doubt on the colony aspect, it is recommended to perform a confirmation testing on the suspect colonies.

Exclusivity: 30 strains of other genera were tested. There was no typical reaction of *Staphylococcus* for these strains.

INTERLABORATORY STUDY

Twelve laboratories participated in the interlaboratory study from 2004. *Staphylococcus aureus* 501 isolated from raw milk used for inoculation of pasteurized skimmed milk. Eight samples were prepared, two at each of four different levels: zero, lower (log 1-2 CFU/ml), middle (log 2-3 CFU/ml) and higher (log 3-4 CFU/ml). The results are given in the table below:

Levels	No. of labs	Mean (log cfu/g)	S _R (log cfu/g)	Bias (log cfu/g)	Lower limit (log cfu/g)	Upper limit (log cfu/g)	± AL (log cfu/g)
1.50	11	1.61	0.28	0.11	-0.32	0.53	0.5
2.66	12	2.65	0.30	-0.02	-0.43	0.39	0.5
3.69	12	3.68	0.11	-0.01	-0.26	0.25	0.5

The accuracy profile is shown in **Figure 3**.

The results of the interlaboratory show that the method performs equivalent to the reference method for levels above 2.0 log cfu/g.

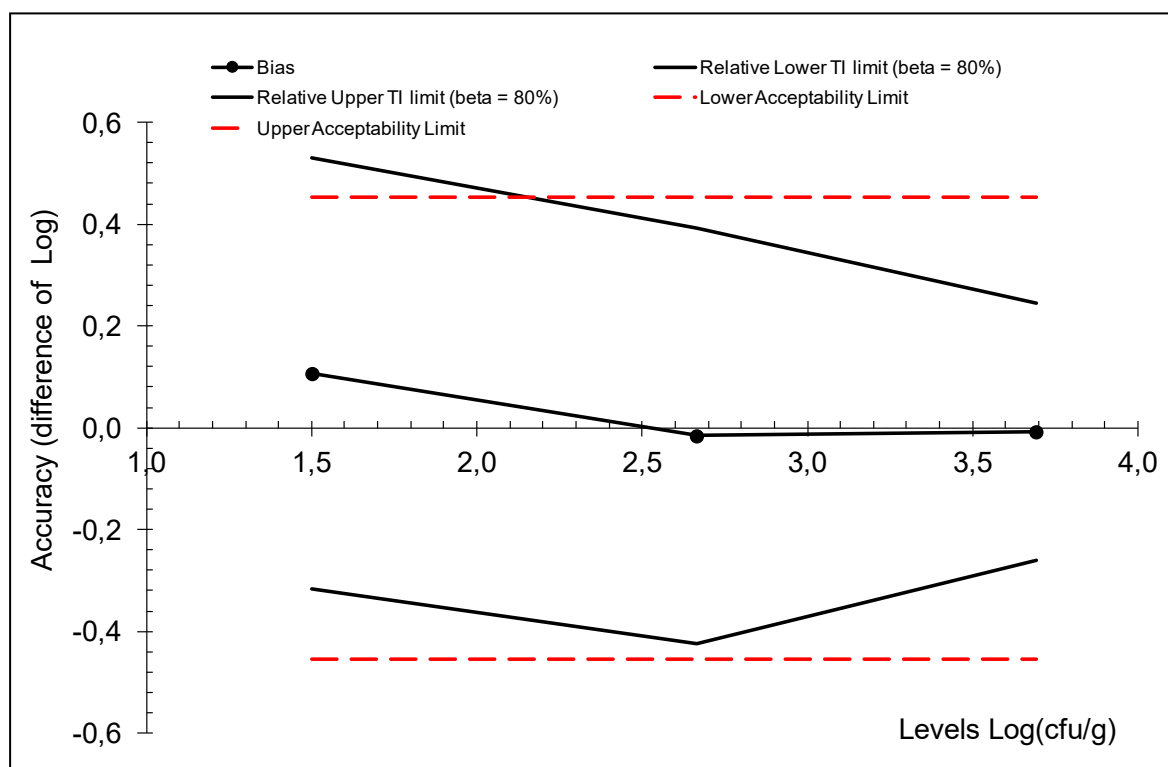


Figure 3. Graphical representation of the accuracy profile of the interlaboratory study for *Staphylococcus*

CONCLUSION

According to the comparison and the interlaboratory study the RAPID' *Staph* provide equivalent results to the reference method ISO 6888-1:1999/ ISO 6888-1:12021 for levels of 2.0 log cfu/g and above. However, in some cases prolongation up to 48 hours incubation time may be necessary to see the halo characteristic for *Staphylococcus*.