



The NCIMB reference collection includes thousands of environmentally important and industrially useful bacteria, as well as plasmids and bacteriophages.

The collection can be searched using our online catalogue, which includes useful additional information for many strains, such as media recipes and equivalency.

The National Collection of Industrial, Food and Marine Bacteria

We follow international conventions and work to ISO 9001 standards to ensure our culture collection provides high-quality, reliable products, that help you progress your projects successfully and efficiently.



A high quality genetic resource

The National Collection of Industrial, Food and Marine Bacteria is the UK's biggest repository for reference strains of environmentally important and industrially useful bacteria, plasmids and bacteriophages.

We provide reference strains, plasmids and genomic DNA to scientists around the globe. The collection is continuously expanding as a result of new accessions from the international research community.

Our strains provide a trusted reference for identification and a valuable genetic resource for research and industry. Strains in the collection have been used for a wide range of applications including food production, probiotic development, industrial enzyme manufacture, quality control procedures, bioremediation, and the search for new compounds with medical applications.

The collection includes strains in ACDP hazard groups 1 and 2, that have been isolated from a hugely diverse range of environments and locations. A few examples of additions to the collection include *Lactobacillus* isolated from fermenting apple juice, an actinomycete from Norwegian fjord sediment, sulphate reducing bacteria from a soured oil well, and bacteria isolated from the gut of a bee.

Reference strains, when you need them

The majority of our reference strains are available for immediate dispatch as they are freeze dried in sealed glass ampoules. This convenient format allows cultures to be transported at ambient temperature, saving you money on shipping costs. However, active cultures can be supplied if required.

Bacteriophages are supplied as thawed liquid suspensions in plastic vials.

You can contact us by phone or email to enquire about the availability of specific strains, or search our online catalogue. The catalogue gives valuable details, where available, on growth requirements, the colony morphology you can expect, metabolite production, the environment from which the strain was isolated, equivalency and references.

All reference strains are supplied under the terms of our Material Transfer Agreement, which allows scientists flexibility in their responsible use. A copy of this can be found on our website.

Reference strains are issued with a Certificate of Authenticity, that guarantees they are derived directly from seed stocks.

We're here to protect your business and support innovation.

All our reference strains are issued with a Certificate of Authenticity, to ensure that our customers can be confident that they are derived directly from seed stocks.



Genomic DNA

We can supply high molecular weight genomic DNA from many of our authenticated reference strains, saving you the time and expense of culturing strains and isolating DNA in your own laboratory. Our high quality bacterial genomic DNA has been isolated under aseptic conditions from actively growing cultures. Eluted DNA is checked by absorbance ratios and stored at -20°C.

Sequence data

We can offer whole genome sequencing of any strain in our collection with full genome annotation and additional bioinformatics analysis. Whole-genome sequencing is the ultimate in organism characterisation. NCIMB uses technologies that create gold-standard microbial genomes, servicing application areas such as bioprospecting and synthetic biology, and providing valuable additional information about strains used in patented processes.

Analysis of whole genome sequences also provides essential information about the occurrence of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) genes. Screening genomes for the presence of AMR genes is an essential step in the development of animal feed additives and probiotic products, as it is crucial that strains used do not facilitate the spread of resistance. We offer specialised analyses for strain markers of antimicrobial resistance as well as antimicrobial discovery.



Adding your strain to the collection

Depositing strains in the National Collection of Industrial, Food and Marine Bacteria is free of charge and complies with the Bacteriological Code for naming and describing new species. We provide the required certification for publication purposes.

We welcome new accessions that meet our criteria – particularly type strains and organisms with new or novel properties, enzymes or metabolites. We can accept bacteria in ACDP hazard groups 1 and 2, plasmids contained in a bacterial host, and bacteriophages.

New accessions are accepted on the understanding that, subject to any health, safety, environmental or other legal or ethical constraints on their distribution, we will make them generally available for purchase.

We work closely with depositors to ensure new accessions to the collection comply with the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol.

We also offer a range of secure storage and patent deposit services for restricted access storage of organisms.



Reference strains

Our culture collection includes thousands of reference strains from ACDP Hazard Groups 1 and 2. All our reference strains are issued with a Certificate of Authenticity, guaranteeing they are derived directly from seed stocks.

Quick dispatch

We can dispatch most of our strains within 24 hours of receiving your order, making sure you have the strains you require when you need them. Orders from UK customers are shipped using the Royal Mail next day delivery service. Overseas orders may take a little longer to arrive.

Freeze-dried for easy shipping

Most of our high quality reference cultures are available freeze-dried so they don't have to be transported chilled. This helps us to keep our shipping costs as low as possible.

Easy revival of cultures

You can find easy to follow instructions for revival of cultures on our website with a short video to clearly illustrate the steps required. Recipes for all our reference strains are provided in our searchable online catalogue.

Genomic DNA

Genomic DNA is available from many of our authenticated reference strains, saving you the time and expense of culturing bacteria and isolating DNA in your own laboratory.

Sequence data

Whole genome sequencing (WGS) is the ultimate in organism characterisation and we can offer WGS of any strain in our collection with full gene annotation and additional bioinformatics analysis.

Depositing strains

Depositing strains in the National Collection of Industrial, Food and Marine Bacteria is free of charge. The collection is internationally recognised and depositing with us complies with the Bacteriological Code for naming and describing new species.

Industry and academic collaboration

We can work with partners to look for novel properties in our strains that may lead to new products or industrial applications. We have worked with both industry and academia, helping organisations progress their projects successfully and efficiently.