

**Additional file 1: Additional bacterial strains (*Bacillus*, *Yersinia*, *Francisella*) included in the study**

Bacterial species	Strain/Isolate	Inactivation method	Source
<b><i>Bacillus</i> spp. spores</b>			
<i>B. anthracis</i>	ames	γ-irradiated	USCRP
	Böhm A58	10% formaldehyde	IVB,B
	Böhm A1	10% formaldehyde	IVB,B
	Böhm A 73202.2000	10% formaldehyde	IVB,B
	NCTC 8234	10% formaldehyde	NCTC
	NCTC 10340	10% formaldehyde	NCTC
	NCTC 01328	10% formaldehyde	NCTC
	NCTC 02620	10% formaldehyde	NCTC
	W514 Bern	10% formaldehyde	IVB,B
<i>B. cereus</i>	ATCC10876	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
	ATCC11778	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
	ATCC13061	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
	ATCC14579	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
	ATCC33019	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
<i>B. subtilis</i>	ATCC6051	none	ATCC
	ATCC6633	none	ATCC
	ATCC11774	none	ATCC
<i>B. thuringiensis</i> ssp. <i>kurstaki</i>	SP09	10% formaldehyde	SIBA
	ATCC10792	10% formaldehyde	ATCC
<i>B. atropheaeus</i>	ATCC9372	none	ATCC
<i>B. circulans</i>	ATCC61	none	ATCC
<i>B. licheniformis</i>	ATCC12759	none	ATCC
	ATCC14580	none	ATCC
<i>B. megaterium</i>	ATCC9885	none	ATCC
	ATCC14581	none	ATCC

<i>B. sphaericus</i>	ATCC4525	none	ATCC
<i>B. pumilus</i>	ATCC14884	none	ATCC
<b><i>Yersinia spp. (biotype)</i></b>			
<i>Y. pestis</i>	ICM 1/41	3%formalin	ICM
	ICM 1/48	3%formalin	ICM
	EV 76	3%formalin	RKI
	CO92	3%formalin	DRDC
	NCTC (0)2868	3%formalin	NCTC
	NCTC 10030 (13927/58)	3%formalin	NCTC
<i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i>	BV1, cattle	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i>	BV2, cattle	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i>	BV3, cattle	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i>	BV4, cattle	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. pseudotuberculosis</i>	1.5, Lausanne 2931	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. enterocolytica</i> (1)	309, human	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. enterocolytica</i> (2)	382, human	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. enterocolytica</i> (3)	371, human	3%formalin	ICM
<i>Y. enterocolytica</i> (4)	28, water	3%formalin	ICM
<b><i>Francisella spp.</i></b>			
<i>F. philomiragia</i>	ATCC25015	3% formalin	ATCC
<i>F. tularensis</i> ssp. <i>tularensis</i>	ATCC 6223	3% formalin	IVB,Z
	Schu 4	3% formalin	RKI
<i>F. tularensis</i> ssp. <i>holarctica</i>	NCTC 10857	3% formalin	NCTC
	JF 3824, human	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 3825, monkey	3% formalin	IVB,B
	human, (Ft5)	3% formalin	KSBL
	human, (Ft6)	3% formalin	KSA
	human, (Ft7)	3% formalin	KSA
	human, (Ft8)	3% formalin	KSA
	human, (Ft9)	3% formalin	KSA
	JF 3820, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 3821, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B

	JF 3822, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 3826, monkey	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 3829, monkey	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 3859, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4092, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4128, human	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4212, human	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4242, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4429, human	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4455, hare	3% formalin	IVB,B
	JF 4456, human	3% formalin	IVB,B

Bacteria were inactivated by 3% formalin, 10% formaldehyde or not. NCTC = National Collection of Type Cultures (London, UK), ICM = Instituto cantonale die microbiologica, Bellinzona (Bellinzona, Switzerland), DRDC = Defence Research and Development Canada (Ottawa, Canada), IVB,Z = Institut für Veterinärakteriologie der Uni Zürich (Zurich, Switzerland), IVB,B = Institut für Veterinärakteriologie der Universität Bern (Bern, Switzerland), KSBL = Kantonsspital Liestal (Liestal, Switzerland), KSA = Kantonsspital Aarau (Aarau, Switzerland), USCRP = U.S. Critical Reagents Program, SIBA = Sampling and Identification of Biological Agents, Isolate from Proficiency Test 2009, RKI = Robert Koch Institute, Isolates from Proficiency Tests (EQADeBa, QUANDHIP, Berlin, Germany), ATCC = American Type Culture Collection.