**Principle**

The simple test tube flotation method is a qualitative test for the detection of nematode and cestode eggs and coccidia oocysts in the faeces. It is based on the separating of eggs from faecal material and concentrating them by means of a flotation fluid with an appropriate specific gravity.

**Application**

This is a good technique to use in initial surveys to establish which groups of parasites are present.

**Equipment**

· Beakers or plastic containers  
· A tea strainer (preferably nylon) or double layer cheesecloth  
· Measuring cylinder or other container graded by volume  
· Fork, tongue blades or other type of stirring rod  
· Test tube  
· Test tube rack or a stand  
· Microscope  
· Microslides, coverslips  
· Balance or teaspoon  
· Flotation fluid (see the Appendix to this handbook for formulation)

**Procedure**

[(a) Put approximately 3 g of faeces (weigh or measure with a precalibrated teaspoon) into Container 1.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0a.jpg)

[(b) Pour 50 ml flotation fluid into Container 1.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0b.jpg)

[(c) Mix (stir) faeces and flotation fluid thoroughly with a stirring device (tongue blade, fork).](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0c.jpg)

[(d) Pour the resulting faecal suspension through a tea strainer or a double-layer of cheesecloth into Container 2.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0d.jpg)

[(e) Pour the faecal suspension into a test tube from Container 2.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0e.jpg)

[(f) Place the test tube in a test tube rack or stand.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0f.jpg)

[(g) Gently top up the test tube with the suspension, leaving a convex meniscus at the top of the tube and carefully place a coverslip on top of the test tube.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0g.jpg)

[(h) Let the test tube stand for 20 minutes.](http://www.fao.org/wairdocs/ilri/x5492e/x5492e0h.jpg)

(i) Carefully lift off the coverslip from the tube, together with the drop of fluid adhering to it, and immediately place the coverslip on a microscope slide.