

Job Class Profile: Animal Health Technologist**Pay Level: LX-27 Point Band: 682-716**

Factor	Knowledge	Interpersonal Skills	Physical Effort	Concentration	Complexity	Accountability & Decision Making	Impact	Development and Leadership	Environmental Working Conditions	Total Points
Rating	5	4	4	5	4	3	4	1	6	
Points	233	67	25	24	120	65	83	21	64	702

JOB SUMMARY

The Animal Health Technologist performs routine diagnostic laboratory work and provides assistance to veterinarians during surgery and in the control of disease outbreaks as well as related clerical work. Work may also include maintaining a pharmacy and dispensing medication under the direction of a veterinarian.

Key and Periodic Activities

- Performs various laboratory diagnostic duties and maintains quality assurance/quality controls (QA/QC) and updates Standard Operating Procedures (SOP). Laboratory testing procedures may include haematology, bacteriology, and parasitology. Results are recorded and transmitted to Veterinarians or directly to clients as required. For analysis not performed at the specific lab, samples are packaged according to Transportation of Dangerous Goods regulation and shipped to reference labs out of the province. Maintains and performs routine calibration of laboratory equipment.
- Performs aquaculture laboratory diagnostic duties which may include preparing bacterial media cultures for the isolation of microorganisms for microscopic examination; biochemical tests and microbiological stains on isolated organisms; antibiotic sensitivity tests on pathological bacterial isolates; blood collection and haemoglobin determination; analysis of raw seawater samples for the presence of viral and bacterial contaminants.
- Maintains inventory of pharmaceutical, laboratory, radiology, office and miscellaneous supplies. Maintains Control Drug Logs as per federal regulations. Dispenses prescription and non-prescription medication under the direction of Veterinarians.
- Conducts sampling visits to marine cage sites and on land aquaculture facilities. Travels to sites and designated areas by truck, boat all terrain vehicles and snowmobiles to collect fin and shell fish samples. Examines live and dead fish specimens for pathogens and parasites by direct/gross and microscopic techniques in aid of surveillance, research, field trials, scheduled and emergency aquatic health visits.
- Conducts field visits to farms/agriculture operations to collect milk, blood, and other biological samples. Provides animal restraint and handling assistance for veterinarians performing procedures such as dehorning, equine dental work and blood transfusions.
- Maintains records of samples, diagnostic findings, examination results, diagnostic tests, laboratory analysis and diagnosis. Compiles monthly and annual reports. Performs statistical analysis.

Key and Periodic Activities

- Co-ordinates research and field trials. Provides technical expertise to outside research institutions.
- Provides surgical assistance to veterinarians in the field for caesarean sections and abdominal surgery of cattle and castration of horses. Administers anaesthesia for equine castrations as directed by veterinarian. Provides anaesthetic and surgical assistance for minor procedures performed in clinic on wildlife and small ruminants.
- Maintains radiology equipment. Takes x-rays in the field and clinic and develops radiographs.
- Performs post mortem examinations of domestic and wild animals and collects specimens for submission to outside laboratories.
- Assists with information sharing to the aquaculture industry in workshops and conferences.
- Presents information to school children and community groups on issues of animal diseases, their prevention and spread. Attends public fairs and staffs information booths.
- Schedules veterinary visits, compiles weekly revenue summaries from drug sales, maintains computerized data on the animal health software programs and produces monthly reports of regional activities.

SKILL

Knowledge

General and Specific Knowledge:

- Laboratory techniques and procedures.
- Various software applications.
- Survey techniques.
- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS).

Formal Education and/or Certification(s):

Minimum: Graduation from an accredited Animal Health Technology Program along with a Registered Veterinary Technologist Certification (RVT).

Years of Experience:

- Minimum: 1 - 2 years.

Competencies:

Written and verbal communication skills.

Analysis and assessment skills.

Operation and maintenance of laboratory equipment.

Interpersonal Skills

- A range of interpersonal skills such as listening, asking questions providing routine and complex/specialized information and gaining the co-operation of others to complete work is required when undertaking laboratory and field work. Other skills such as delivering presentations, training, coaching/mentoring and dealing with upset animal owners are also required.
- Interactions occur with employees in the immediate work area, the department, supervisors,

employees in other departments, customers/clients/general public, sales representatives and professional advisors.

- Most significant contacts are: Veterinarians (to co-ordinate daily work plans/report laboratory and diagnostic results and obtain direction on various job related activities); clients (to collaborate on daily activities and requests for veterinary services); and employees within the department.

EFFORT

Physical Effort

- The demands of the job occasionally result in considerable fatigue requiring periods of rest.
- Activities also regularly require physically handling animals, specimens, materials and equipment, typically ranging from 10 – 50 lbs.; however, occasionally these may exceed 50 lbs.
- Laboratory and field work regularly requires the use of hand tools that require accurate control and steadiness, instruments for performing laboratory testing that require fine finger/precision work; gross motor skills requiring strength and coordination; and working in awkward or cramped positions.

Concentration

- **Visual** concentration is a regular requirement when performing work on a computer, performing microscopic work, entering large amounts of data, examining specimens and carrying out laboratory testing.
- **Auditory** concentration is necessary to listen for alarms and alerts on laboratory equipment, when travelling on motorized equipment which can be noisy, and working around heavy equipment.
- **Touch and smell** are important sensory requirements as valuable information can be obtained from the texture and/or smell of samples and aid in detection of gases and chemical agents.
- Activities which can be **repetitious and require alertness** occurs when driving long distance, performing tests which require repetition to ensure accuracy or due to high volumes.
- **Higher than normal level of attentiveness/alertness** is required when immobilizing and restraining various animals, administering and monitoring anaesthesia, operating heavy machinery such as trucks, boats and ATVs when dealing with highly toxic chemicals or reagents.
- **Eye/hand coordination** is essential for many tasks from driving, operating lab equipment, working with sharp instruments and with very sensitive laboratory equipment.
- **Exact results and precision** are required in all laboratory diagnostic testing procedures and result recording, conducting animal examinations and sample collection.

Complexity

- Tasks range from regularly repetitive/well defined or different but related requiring the use of similar skills and knowledge to some different and unrelated activities. The activities are varied and include laboratory, field and office responsibilities.

- Work usually involves defined and standard work processes; however, occasionally there are problems with limited opportunity for standardized solutions.
- Challenges/problems/issues can usually be addressed by following standard lab procedures and protocols and/or guidelines and by referring to manuals, and consulting with supervisor.

RESPONSIBILITY

Accountability and Decision-Making

- Works tasks and activities are moderately prescribed or controlled.
- Some discretion is exercised in daily laboratory procedures, purchasing of replacement supplies, equipment maintenance and routine sampling procedures.
- Purchases over \$200.00 and for other than general supplies, and travel outside the province require supervisory approval.
- Discretion and judgement are used in interpreting and applying guidelines and procedures in the laboratory and determining reliability and in releasing laboratory results to veterinarians for interpretations.
- A high degree of discretion and judgement is exercised when prioritizing tasks and determining if additional testing is required.

Impact

- Impacts are felt internally within the immediate work area and department as well as externally with customers, clients and general public.
- Work activities impact resources such as equipment, material resources (used to perform laboratory work); information (accuracy of results, data collection); health/safety and corporate image.
- Data collected is used to make recommendations for quota allocations. In the event of a mistake or error there could be significant impact on the above-mentioned resources. Given the large volume of data handled, errors at the basic level have the potential to be transferred to a larger audience. Therefore, data verification and validation is essential.
- Consequences of laboratory diagnostic mistakes are felt significantly by farmers and animals/herds if incorrect results are provided. This will impact the diagnosis and treatment plan.
- While errors could be extreme, quality control procedures and supervision mitigate potential risks of errors.

Development and Leadership of Others

- Not responsible for the supervision of staff.
- There is an expectation to provide occasional advice and guidance to new employees, veterinarian students on laboratory procedures.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Environmental Working Conditions

- Safety equipment must be worn/used and special precautions taken to prevent accidents, injury and illness when working in the laboratory, on the farm around large animals and

around aquaculture sites. Latex gloves, laboratory coats, masks and goggles, steel toed boots, fume hoods, helmets, personal flotation devices, and bio-security cabinets are examples.

- There is significant likelihood of minor cuts, bruises, abrasions or minor illnesses and moderate likelihood for injuries, illnesses resulting from hazards given that all health and safety regulations are followed.
- Exposed to sharp objects, bodily fluids and waste, infectious disease, odours and fumes and occasionally exposed to unusual/distracting noise, dirt/dust, filth or garbage, hazardous chemicals, toxic or poisonous substances, wet or slippery surfaces, adverse weather conditions, travel, physical dangers and radiation.