

## ISEF Rules

### **A. Additional Rules for Projects Involving Unknown Microorganisms**

Studies involving unknown microorganisms present a challenge because the presence, concentration and pathogenicity of possible agents are unknown. In science fair projects, these studies typically involve the collection and culturing of microorganisms from the environment (e.g. soil, household surfaces, skin.)

1. Research with unknown microorganisms can be treated as a BSL-1 study under the following conditions:

1. Organisms are cultured in a plastic petri dish (or other standard non-breakable container) and sealed.
2. Experiment involves only procedures in which the petri dish remains sealed throughout the experiment (e.g., counting presence of organisms or colonies).
3. The sealed petri dish is disposed of via autoclaving or disinfection under the supervision of the Direct Supervisor.

2. If a culture container with unknown microorganisms is opened for any purpose, (except for disinfection for disposal), it must be treated as a BSL-2 study and involve BSL-2 laboratory precautions.