

# Ten Commandments\* of Using Microbial Strains

1. Thou shalt keep a Strain Database carrying Proper Genetic Designations. This shall be the greatest friend of thee.
2. Thou shalt prepare frozen Stocks of all Strains, and they shall be Marked with Unique Identifiers.
3. Thou shalt always perform Single Colony Purifications\*\*.
4. Thou shalt Limit the number of media Passages one performs on an isolate.
5. Thou shalt always Check Strains for all Important Phenotypes.
6. Thou shalt always use Controls when checking Strains.
7. Thou shalt Not start broth cultures from colonies sitting on plates for extended periods of time.
8. Thou shalt always treat Strains given to thee with healthy Skepticism. See Commandment 6.
9. Thou shalt Label all Plates and Sectors containing streaks with appropriate Strain Numbers.
10. Thou shalt Strive for Precision when Describing Strains, particularly in thy Strain Database.

\* This Tablet resides at: <http://www.faculty.washington.edu/merza/procedures.html>  
It is Modified from Tablets Carried Down from the Mountain by the Prophet Ralph: <http://www.tufts.edu/sackler/microbiology/faculty/isberg/index.html>

\*\* Except on those Rare Occasions when Polyclonality is a Virtue.