Probiotic assays are for Total Viable Count. Methods for enumeration may be found in the Food Chemical Codex (FCC), Microbiological Journals, other publications and many manufacturer specific methods are available. Most of these methods are for raw material and single strain materials. When testing blended probiotic samples, selecting the best possible method is important and the manufacturer may be the best source regarding the proper method to perform. (information taken from FCC 10 Appendix XV)

Enumeration methods that are routinely tested include:

• Anaerobic or Aerobic incubation methods
• Spore forming bacteria enumeration using sonification or additional mixing steps to break the spores

Strain examples include:
· Lactobacillus acidophilus
· Lactobacillus bulgaricus
· Lactobacillus brevis
· Lactobacillus sporogeneses
· Bifidobacterium
· Bacillus coagulans

There can also be additions of media inhibitors or specificity agents, so the proper testing method is important. Make sure to discuss method choices and request the recommended method from the manufacturer before ordering your probiotic testing.