

Sampling Requirements

Sampling is to be performed by your staff and is out of the control of Biotech Laboratories. Please ensure your staff are informed of the following requirements. All documents referred to are available from the laboratory. When sampling, it is essential that you do the following:

- Ensure that the sample taken is representative of the source under investigation. This may require multiple samples to ensure you have a statistically relevant representation.
- The collection technique must ensure that the sample is not compromised during the collection procedure. Do not use eskies or courier bags as sample containers as these are reused and not sterile.

Sample size and containers for different analyses

Chemical analyses: Contact the laboratory and specify the analyses to be performed and we will advise the containers or amount of sample required. This information is provided to us by the Australian Government laboratory, National Measurement Institute.

Microbiological analyses: Ensure you have on file the applicable documents from the following list. These can be obtained by contacting the laboratory.

- Sample size requirements, Collection and TAT - Food Samples
- Sample size requirements, Collection and TAT - Water Samples
- Sample size requirements, Collection and TAT - Miscellaneous Samples

Sampling procedure

Water sampling: Direct collection into sample bottle or, only if flow is excessive, transfer into a sample bottle from a collection vessel. Bottle only to be uncapped during sample collection and at no other time. Do not rinse.

- Potable water: Request a copy of Procedure 48
- Legionella: contact the public health unit in your area for guidelines and procedure

Food and food products: It is optimal to supply the food in the same container or packaging as it will be presented for sale or consumption. Fresh loose food products such as fruit and vegetables are to be aseptically transferred to sterile or clean/dry containers which are sealed and labelled clearly.

Biosolids, soil and other environmental samples: Samples are to be aseptically transferred to sterile or clean/dry containers which are sealed and labelled clearly.

Air samples / Exposure Plates: Agar plates are exposed to the required volume of air with the lid removed. Immediately replace the lid after exposure without touching the agar surface. Seal the plate with adhesive tape. A small amount on opposite sides is sufficient.

Swab samples: Ensure you have on file

- Surface Swab collection procedures



Labelling requirements

All containers are to be labelled on the side of the container and never on the lid.

The minimum labelling requirements are:

- Company or facility name
- Full sample identification *

* Note that in some cases, such as swab samples, the area available on the container is not sufficient to record the full sample identification. In these cases it is acceptable to record the sample number on the container as long as this number is matched on the Analysis Request Form where the full identification is recorded. Ensure that the numbers 6 and 9 are written with an underscore (6 / 9) so that they cannot be misread.

Air samples: Agar plates are labelled on the base and never on the lid.

Sample storage and transportation requirements

All samples are to be stored and transported to the laboratory as per the following guidelines:

Water for Legionella testing: Ambient, if it will be processed within 24 hours. Refrigerated, if the samples will be received and processed within 48 hours.

Water for all other microbiological analyses: Refrigerated and transported on the same day as collection so that the samples are processed within 24 hours.

Frozen food: Frozen (this includes samples for histamine testing)

Refrigerated food: Refrigerated

Room temperature stable food: Ambient

Air samples: Refrigerated and transported on the same day as collection so that the samples are processed within 48 hours.

Swab samples: Ambient or refrigerated and transported on the same day as collection so that the samples are processed within 24 hours.

Analysis request forms

All samples submitted must be accompanied by an Analysis Request Form. This form must detail at least the following:

- Full client or company name. The company address is required if there are multiple listings for the company in our computer system.
- The full identification of each sample as it is to appear on the final laboratory report.
- Clear indication of what analyses are required for each sample.

Provision of other relevant information

Any further information that is relevant to processing samples or reporting results can either be emailed to the laboratory or noted on the Analysis Request Form. This information will then be added to your company profile.