

GENERAL TEST ORDERING AND SPECIMEN COLLECTION INFORMATION – FOOD, ANIMAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

Inform the following prior to collecting samples:

Calgary Bacteriology Laboratory – **403-944-1214**

Samples **MUST** be:

- Associated with human case(s) or investigation(s) (may or may not have an EI# at time of submission) related to human infection **AND**
- Submitted by a Medical Officer of Health (MOH) or designate (eg. Public Health Inspector, Environmental Health Officer)

1. Acceptance Criteria:

ProvLab will process:

- Food for human consumption that is collected from a patient's residence, a restaurant, store or market, or from an event
- Food for animal consumption that is associated with human case(s) or investigation(s) related to human infection
- Pet feces if associated with human enteric bacterial infection

ProvLab will NOT process, but may refer out to an appropriate testing agency:

- Live or dead whole animal products typically used as reptile feed (e.g. mice, chicks, crickets)
- Litter used to house animals suspected of being the source of human infection

2. Rejection Criteria:

ProvLab will NOT accept:

- Food samples collected from manufacturing/processing plants/production lines
- Food samples for quality testing, microbial risk assessment or routine surveillance
- Environmental swabs

3. Requisition

A separate requisition ([ProvLab Food Sample Submission form](#)) must accompany EACH sample submitted for laboratory investigation.

Complete ALL fields of the requisition for EACH sample submitted.

4. Sample Collection and Labelling

- Label a sterile WHIRL-PAK® bag or sterile leak-proof container for each sample to be submitted
 - Two unique identifiers **must** be applied to each sample. Identifiers must include:
 - **Sample type/description** (eg: chicken, pizza, dog treat)
 - **Sample collection location** (eg: XYZ Restaurant, Patient's Home, etc)
 - Ensure the unique identifiers on the sample match what is written on the respective requisition for each sample
- Place sample in the labelled container using aseptic technique
 - Collect at least 100 grams or 100 mL if possible. If insufficient sample is submitted, bacteriological testing may need to be prioritized
- Place the labelled WHIRL-PAK® bag or sterile leak-proof container into a larger biohazard bag and seal to prevent accidental leakage during transport
 - **Note:** Samples that are leaking upon receipt will not be processed
- Place requisition within the external flap of the biohazard bag

5. Transportation ¹

Place all samples in a rigid-sided container or cooler and transport **within 24hrs** to the Laboratory.

- Shipping containers used for food samples should be dedicated to food samples only and should NOT be used for clinical samples or other types of environmental samples

Samples should be stored and transported as follows:

- Shelf-stable samples at room temperature
- Perishable samples with sufficient ice packs to maintain refrigeration temperature (eg: between 0°C and 7°C)
 - Do NOT freeze samples unless they are already frozen
- Frozen samples with sufficient ice packs to maintain freezing temperature
 - Do NOT allow frozen samples to thaw during shipment

1. Compendium of Analytical Methods Appendix B (Health Canada, November 2006)