

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Samples

1. Only test items when ready for harvest and sale.
2. Packing shed & central market samples should be collected across the line/consignment.
3. Use only clean sealable plastic bags.
4. Label bags clearly with name of grower and item variety details plus batch number as applicable.
5. Hand hygiene is essential (e.g. use clean protective gloves)
6. Provide 1kg sample (or equivalent volume).
7. Pre-cool samples to below 8° Celsius following collection and hold in chiller storage

Note: Do not freeze samples



Pack in insulated container with ice brick and contact us with details of delivery or pick-up.

Water Samples

Every care must be taken during water sampling to avoid contamination of the sample so that results obtained are truly representative of the water sampled. Where samples for several purposes are to be taken from the same source, the sample for bacteriological examination should be taken first.

1. Always use a clean sterile sample bottle to collect water samples.
2. Keep the sample bottle closed until the moment it is to be refilled.
3. Remove the screw cap; ensuring fingers do not come into contact with the neck of the bottle or with the inner surface of the screw cap.

Sampling From a Body of Water:

1. After removing the screw cap from the bottle, and holding near the base, plunge the bottleneck downward below the surface.
2. Turn the bottle until the neck points slightly upward and the mouth is directed toward any current. If there is no current, create an artificial current by pushing the bottle forward horizontally in a direction away from the hand.
3. When the bottle has almost filled, draw the bottle out of the water and immediately replace the screw cap.
Note: Avoid the sides and bases of water basins, or the banks and beds of raw water supplies, to prevent sludge and other debris being collected in the sample.
4. Note source, date and time of sample collection on the bottle. Use waterproof pen.





Sampling From a Hosepipe:

1. Allow the water to run until the hosepipe is clear of any sludge or stagnant water.
2. Fill the bottle without rinsing, leaving ample air space to facilitate mixing in the laboratory. (Fill to the level of the bottle's "shoulder".)
3. Replace the screw cap immediately, observing the same precautions as for opening the bottle.
4. Note source, date and time of sample collection on the bottle. Use waterproof pen.

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Environmental Swabs

1. Obtain sufficient new sealed swabs for use (2 x swabs required for each site).
2. Check expiry date shown on swab wrappers. Discard if out of date.
3. Choose the site to be swabbed. Ideally the site should be not less than 10cm² (i.e. 3.2cm x 3.2cm)
4. Write the site details and date swabbed on each using a waterproof pen.
5. Remove the swab stick from the plastic tube taking care not to contaminate the cotton bud end.
6. Apply the cotton bud end to the surface to be tested and swab the designated area by rolling the swab between the thumb and forefinger across the surface in one direction using parallel strokes followed by parallel strokes in the opposite direction (i.e. right angles to the first strokes)
7. Immediately return the swab stick into the hard plastic tube taking care not to touch any other surface.
8. Repeat steps 5 to 7 for the second swab of the same site.
(Remember to collect 2 swabs from each site – one will be tested for E.coli & the other for Listeria)
9. Place completed swabs into a sealed bag or insulated container and pre-cool to below 8° Celsius following collection. Always ensure that swabs are kept dry.



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Please contact us if you need –

- Sample bags
- Sterile water bottles
- Environmental swabs



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