GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PathWest LABORATORY MEDICINE WA

Food Hygiene Laboratory | Environmental Microbiology Unit
Level 2, J Block, Hospital Avenue, Nedlands WA 6009
T: (08) 6457 2165 | **E:**foods.pathwest@health.wa.gov.au

SWAB SAMPLE COLLECTION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill in the **PathWest Food Hygiene Laboratory Swab Request Form [S]** with the following information:
   - Company Name, Address and Contact Details
   - Date Sampled and Sampled By/Signature
   - Purchase Order No. (if applicable)
   - Additional Sample Comments
   - Testing Required (select tests required):
     a. Total Plate Count
     b. *Escherichia coli* Count
     c. *Listeria monocytogenes* Detection
     d. *Salmonella* Detection

     For other tests such as Yeast and Mould Count, please specify in the 'additional sample comments' section.
   - Client's Reference No. (your sample reference number, if applicable)
   - Site Description (description of area/item/utensil swabbed)
   - Area Swabbed (select one):
     a. 10cm x10cm (equivalent to 100cm^2)
     b. Item (e.g. door knob, piping bag, tap)
     c. Utensil (e.g. spoon, ladle, knife)
     d. Area swabbed other than all of the above (e.g. 5cm x 5cm, 25cm^2)

   Note: For Total Plate Count and *E. coli* Count, record the exact measurement of the area swabbed expressed in cm^2 or cm x cm, e.g. 100 cm^2, 10cm x 10cm. For items and utensils that cannot be measured, swab the entire surface area and record "Item" or "Utensil" as the area swabbed.

2. Refer to pages 2/3 for the swab sampling procedure.

   One swab per test must be provided as detailed below:

Test Requested	Swab Sample Required
a. Total Plate Count and/or *E. coli* Count	1 x Copan SRK® stick swab **or** 1 x Environmental Flexi Swab **or** 1 x Sponge Swab
b. *Listeria monocytogenes* Detection	1 x Copan SRK® stick swab **or** 1 x Environmental Flexi Swab **or** 1 x Sponge Swab
c. *Salmonella* Detection	1 x Copan SRK® stick swab **or** 1 x Environmental Flexi Swab **or** 1 x Sponge Swab

3. If submitting more than 6 swabs, please contact the laboratory at least 4 hours prior to collection to ensure adequate media is available for testing.
4. Ensure that each swab is labelled with date of collection and site description prior to use and that the information on the swab matches the request form.
5. The following swabbing equipment is supplied by PathWest and can be requested by completing the **PathWest FHL Supply Order Form** and sending the completed form to the laboratory by email: foods.pathwest@health.wa.gov.au
6. Form can be downloaded from the 'Food Laboratory' page under'Commercial Services' at https://pathwest.health.wa.gov.au/Our-Services/Commercial-Services/Resources
   - Copan SRK® stick swab (10mL)
   - Environmental Flexi Swab
   - Dehydrated Sponge in whirlpak bag and 0.1% Peptone Salt Solution (25mL) – for for whole animal carcass swabbing)
   - Reusable sterile Swabbing Template (10cm x 10cm), insulated transport containers, and ice bricks.
7. Deliver the swab samples by 3:00 pm, Monday - Friday to:
   PathWest Food Hygiene Laboratory
   Level 2, J Block, QEII Medical Centre, Hospital Avenue, Nedlands 6009
8. The swab samples must be transported in an insulated transport container with chilled ice brick and submitted to the laboratory within 24 hours of collection.
9. For any queries, please contact:
   - **Ingrid Iaschi (Scientist-in-Charge)**
     Email: Ingrid.Iaschi@health.wa.gov.au
   - **Food Hygiene Laboratory**
     Email: Foods.Pathwest@health.wa.gov.au

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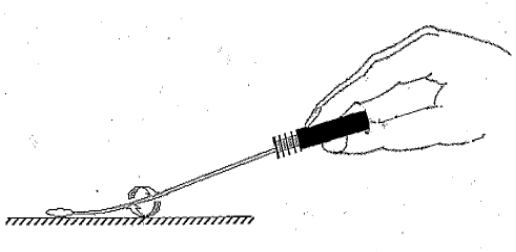
COPAN SRK® STICK SWAB AND FLEXI SWAB SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Check the expiry date on the Copan SRK® stick swab and/or Environmental Flexi Swab. Do not proceed with sampling if the swab/s has expired.

2. Wearing clean, disposable gloves, aseptically remove the sterile swab from the container. Use the cap as the handle.

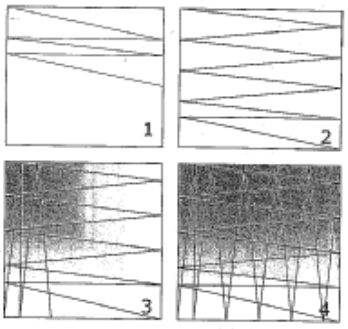
3. Remove the excess hydrating solution by pressing the swab against the interior wall of the container in a rotating motion.

4. Hold the swab at 30° angle against the surface area when sampling.



5. **a. For Total Plate Count and *Escherichia coli* Count:**

   1) Swabbing Surfaces Using the 10cm x 10cm (100cm^2) Template:
   Using firm pressure, rub the swab slowly from left to right, up and down, and diagonally. Reverse the direction between strokes and rotate the swab to cover the whole area in the 100cm^2 template as shown below:



   2) Swabbing Items and Utensils (e.g. door knob, tap, knife, ladle, spoon):
   Using firm pressure, rub the swab slowly three times over the entire surface of the item or utensil, reversing the direction each time.

   b. For *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Salmonella* Detection:
   Swab as large an area as possible.

6. Place the swab back into the container and seal completely to ensure no leakage occurs during transport.

7. The swab samples must be transported in an esky with chilled ice bricks and submitted to the laboratory within 24 hours of collection.

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SPONGE SWAB SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Check the expiry date on the bottle of 25mL 0.1% Peptone Salt Solution. Do not proceed with sampling if the solution has expired.

2. Put on a pair of clean, disposable gloves and carefully tear open the whirlpak bag and add half of the 25mL 0.1% Peptone Salt Solution.

3. Reclose the whirlpak bag and gently massage the sponge to ensure it is well hydrated.

4. While the whirlpak bag is still closed, carefully work the sponge to the top of the bag and squeeze any excess fluid from the sponge.

5. Wipe the sponge over the desired area, working 10 times horizontally and 10 times vertically.

6. Carefully place the sponge back into the whirlpak bag and add the remaining half of the 25mL 0.1% Peptone Salt Solution.

7. Reseal the whirlpak bag by folding down multiple times and then closing with the tie.