

# CLIENT GUIDELINES

## Listeria Sampling – Sponge Method

---

The information in this guideline is being provided to you as a resource to enable you to develop a sampling plan for your operation prior to sampling and sending your sample to PrimusLabs.com for analysis. This is not a complete procedure however, but it is based upon the requirements of Compendium of Methods for the Microbiological Examination of Foods.

*The analytical results for these samples are representative only of the actual sample sent to PrimusLabs.com (please see the Disclaimer of Warranties provided with the final approved results or on our web site – [www.primuslabs.com](http://www.primuslabs.com)).*

### SUPPLIES:

Water resistant markers	Cooler with gel ice packs
Pre-hydrated sterile sponge pack or,	
Sterile sponges	DE Neutralizing buffer
Sterile Whirl Pac bags	Rubber gloves

### REMARKS:

1. Do not open sterile sample bag until you start sampling.
2. Close the sample bag between each sub-sample in a composite sample.
3. Change rubber gloves between each sample when taking individual samples.
4. Environmental samples should be taken under floor mats, in wall or floor cracks, from drains, in areas of peeling paint, under work tables, equipment crevices and so forth.
5. Samples should be taken just prior to sending them to the lab as analysis should begin within 24 hours of sampling.

### PROCEDURE:

1. Select the areas to be sampled.
2. Mark the outside of the sterile sample bag with sample identification information.
3. Put on a new pair of disposable rubber gloves.

#### If utilizing the prehydrated sponge pack:

4. Break the seal on the sterile sample bag.
5. Proceed to the first sample area and remove a sponge from the sample bag.
6. Firmly swab an area of one square meter and return the sponge to the sample bag. Then go to step 13.

#### If utilizing dehydrated sponges:

7. Break the seal on the sterile sample bag.
8. Open the sterile sample sponge bag and place the sponge in the sterile sample bag. If taking a composite sample repeat this step for the number of sub-samples to be taken.
9. Pour sufficient neutralizing buffer solution into the sample bag to hydrate all of the sponges in the bag.

10. Proceed to the first sample area and remove a sponge from the sample bag.
11. Firmly swab an area of one square meter and return the sponge to the sample bag.
12. If taking a composite sample, close the sample bag and go to the next sample area and repeat steps 7 and 8 with a new sponge until all sub-samples have been taken.
13. Place the samples into a cooler with sufficient blue ice to maintain the as sampled condition during transport to the laboratory facility.

Note: If using water based ice, ensure that it is double-bagged to prevent contamination of the sample.