



# Milk Culture Collection Procedure

updated May 2018

- A. Collect sample immediately before milking. Wear gloves for sampling.
- B. Clean and dry the udder using standard good udder preparation as you would for milking. Use individual paper towels to dry the teats prior to sampling.
- C. Scrub each teat end opening thoroughly in 3 directions with a cotton ball soaked in alcohol.
- D. Discard the first one or two streams of milk.
- E. Remove vial cap carefully and fill bottle about 2/3 full. Do not touch the rim with the teat or your fingers. For SCC testing, the vial must be filled to capacity.
- F. To collect a composite sample from a cow, collect an approximately equal volume of milk from each quarter in one sample bottle.
- G. With a waterproof marker, label vials with the identification numbers. We also recommend that you indicate the cow name and the date. If quarter samples are collected, designate each quarter sampled as RF, RH, LF, or LH
- H. Collect milk samples from quarters with clinical mastitis before treatment.
- I. Cool samples on ice in a portable cooler as they are collected. Refrigerate samples immediately after taking them.
- J. Wrap and package samples thoroughly to insulate them and keep them cool during shipment to the laboratory. Samples must arrive at the laboratory within 24 hours of collection.
- K. The AHL will accept incoming courier shipments from Purolator from within Ontario on an “incoming collect” basis. Contact [ahlinfo@uoguelph.ca](mailto:ahlinfo@uoguelph.ca) to order.

## Guelph Courier Address

Animal Health Laboratory  
Laboratory Services Division  
University of Guelph  
Building 89, 419 Gordon St.  
NW Corner Gordon/McGilvray  
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

If you have further questions please call the milk culture lab at (519) 824-4120 ext.54528.

### **PLEASE NOTE**

**You will be charged lab fees** regardless of whether you submit clean or contaminated samples! For the best possible results from the laboratory, take your samples directly from the cow using the sterile technique according to “Milk Culture Collection Procedure”

**Do not take samples via the milking equipment or weigh meter.** They will be overgrown with bacteria and cannot be further processed or interpreted in the lab.

**To request SCC testing** on your samples, clearly indicate this on the front of the submission form. SCC testing cannot be performed on samples that have been previously frozen and/or samples that contain clots.

*We look forward to providing you with the best possible service. This begins with good samples! Thank you for taking the time to read this note.*