

SAMPLING COMMERCIAL POULTRY HOUSES FOR AVIAN INFLUENZA (For All Subtypes of AI)

ITEMS REQUIRED:

- Clothing and other biosecurity protection;
- Viral transport kit containing box of 20 (10 ml tubes) of VTM and accompanying swabs;
- Latex or vinyl gloves;
- Permanent marking pen;
- Cooler and ice packs, etc.

SAMPLE COLLECTION:

Note: All samples must be taken by government authorized personnel (DAG, USDA, or their designated laboratory personnel. If a foreign animal disease (a reportable FAD, such as HPAI) is suspected, sampling can only be conducted by a certified FADD (Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician) or an authorized representative. Prior notification of USDA or DAG is required.

- A total of 10 tubes are collected per poultry house.
Each tube contains 11 swabs taken per specified site, for a total of 110 swabs in 10 tubes.

AREAS TO SAMPLE:

- Floors or Slats: Take 44 swabs from enough sites to get representative samples from the entire house (11 swabs, 4 tubes). In cage layer houses, both pit floors and/or cage walkways may be sampled.
- Fan Houses: Take 22 swabs of representative fan areas and fan housings (11 swabs, 2 tubes). Include fan box area and blades/louvers. (Make sure fan is not operating at time of sampling).
- Walls: Take 22 swabs (11 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas of walls. Sample in enough areas to have walked a minimum of 25 percent of the house.
- Entrance Areas: Take 11 swabs (11 swabs, 1 tube) from representative areas.
- Egg Rooms/Utility Rooms: Take 11 swabs (11 swabs, 1 tube) from representative areas.
- Coolers or Feed Troughs/Feeders: Take 11 swabs (11 swabs, 1 tube) from representative areas.
- Compost: If poultry are composted within the house, take 88 swabs (11 swabs, 8 tubes) from representative areas of the compost piles.
- Nest Boxes: If the house contains nest boxes, take 22 swabs (11 swabs, 2 tubes) from representative areas of the nest boxes/nesting areas.

SUBMISSION OF SAMPLES TO LABORATORIES

Please Note: In collecting and submitting samples, identify the Premises precisely. All submission forms should include a Premises ID Number. If you do not know the number, request one from the RI DEM Division of Agriculture (DAG at 401-222-2781). If a Premises ID number is unavailable, on all submission forms record the street address where the samples were taken. (Note: That address may differ from the grower's mailing address.)

- ❑ Samples can be tested only at a USDA- or DAG-designated laboratory, normally the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (CVMDL) at the University of Connecticut. In accordance with USDA / APHIS NVS protocols, confirmatory testing/subtyping will normally be done at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa
- ❑ Call the laboratory in advance to let them know when the samples will arrive:
 - Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory
 - University of Connecticut , 61 N. Eagleville Rd., Storrs, CT 06269
 - Phone 860-486-0837; Fax 860-486-3738
- ❑ To ensure the integrity of swab samples in viral transport medium (VTM):
 - Check that the viral transport medium (VTM) has not changed to a bright pink color (or that clear amber BHI has not turned cloudy), that it remains uncontaminated, and that its date of expiration has not passed.
 - VTM should be refrigerated at all times.
 - Saturate swabs with VTM prior to sampling and immediately following sampling.
 - Place 11 swabs in each tube after sampling.
 - Mark each tube and indicate which samples represent particular areas as detailed.
 - Use a separate submission form for each area.
 - Disinfect the exterior of tubes and their box (including the inside of the lid) prior to transporting to laboratory.
 - Write the farm name and Premises ID on the bottom of the box of samples (not on the lid). If you need a Premises ID number, call the DEM Division of Agriculture (401-222-2781).
 - Keep the swabs in VTM on fresh ice packs until transporting to an approved laboratory (you may need to change ice packs at least every 24 hours).
 - If samples are stored in a freezer for more than 72 hours, seal each box in a leak-proof plastic bag to prevent drying of the VTM.
 - Place a completed copy of an AI Sample Submission Form in each box with corresponding samples and a Premises ID.

The RI DEM Division of Agriculture reserves the right to amend the above mentioned requirements for Avian Influenza with the goal of any changes still being to prevent, contain and eliminate the disease. Changes to the general guidelines of the protocol may result from information including, but not limited to, virus strain, pathogenicity, morbidity and mortality, movement of birds and products, and additional epidemiological information obtained as a result of avian influenza investigations.