Sample Collection and Submission Advice - Livestock

The information below gives sampling advice for a broad range of our tests. Please use the table below and the additional guidance that follows to inform your sample collection. If you need any further advice then please call 0131 535 3130 to speak to our customer support team.

Test	Sample Type	Sample Collection Advice
Biochemistry		
All tests, except those detailed below	Blood	Plain vacutainer (red top)
GSH-Px Plasma Copper Lead Plasma Inorganic Iodine Progesterone Zinc	Blood	Heparin vacutainer (green top)
Glucose	Blood	Fluoride oxalate vacutainer (grey top)
Magnesium (fatal hypomagnesaemia)	Vitreous humour	Plain vacutainer (red top)
Calcium (fatal hypocalcaemia)	Aqueous humour	Plain vacutainer (red top)
Haematology		
All routine tests	Blood	EDTA vacutainer (purple top)
Serology		
All routine tests	Blood	Plain vacutainer (red top)
	Milk	In Bronopol preservative
PCR testing		
All routine tests, except those detailed below	Blood	Plain vacutainer (red top)
	Milk	In Bronopol preservative
Malignant Catarrhal Fever (MCF) Tick-borne fever (TBF)	Blood	Heparin or EDTA vacutainer (green or purple top)
Parasitology		
Worm Egg/Coccidial Oocyst Count Fluke egg count	Faeces	3g minimum
Lungworm detection	Faeces	10g minimum
WEC, fluke and lungworm detection	Faeces	15g minimum
Coproantigen ELISA	Faeces	0.5g minimum
Ectoparasites	Skin scrape Hair/wool pluck	Targeted sampling of five ‘edge of lesion’ sites
Microbiology		
Culture	Swabs	Place in Amies charcoal
	Urine	In Boric acid and plain container
	Milk	Plain container

General Hints and Tips

Submission form – Please provide as much information as possible on the submission form. This will allow better interpretation of results and improve our surveillance for new and unusual diseases.

Faeces samples – Submit in a leak-proof container such as a pot with a screw-on lid. Do not submit samples in a glove!

Pooled/bulked faeces samples – Do not pre-pool samples prior to submitting them to the lab. We will accurately weigh a sample from each animal into the pool for a more representative result. NB - The test for lungworm has not been validated for bulked/pooled samples.

Ruminant Enteritis packages - Please state the age of animal in days when submitting faeces for enteritis packages so that the correct age-appropriate tests are carried out.

Blood samples - Please ensure blood tubes are filled as full as possible, are thoroughly mixed (where necessary) and are submitted promptly after collection. Avoid using 10ml (larger diameter) tubes as these are too wide to be used in our analyser. If you require multiple tests, please consider submitting an extra tube of blood. Where multiple tests including BVDV PCR are requested we need two tubes, one of which is dedicated to the PCR system.

Biochemistry packages - We offer a selection of biochemistry profiles for particular disease syndromes. These profiles, which can be found in our price list and disease investigation guide, are generally discounted compared to the price of individual tests.

Fatal Hypomagnesaemia - Vitreous humour is the sample of choice as it reliably predicts pre-mortem serum magnesium levels for up to 24 hours after death. It can also be used for calcium, BOHB and urea. VH can be collected using a vacutainer needle and plain tube. Push back the upper eyelid and insert the needle into the top of the eyeball so that needle tip sits behind the lens. If the sample contains blood or particulate matter then centrifuge the sample promptly and pipette off an uncontaminated sample.

Fatal Hypocalcaemia – Aqueous humour is the preferred sample for assessing pre-mortem calcium levels. AH can be collected using a vacutainer needle and plain tube, with the needle inserted into the eye so that tip sits in front of the lens. If the sample contains blood or particulate matter then centrifuge the sample promptly and pipette off an uncontaminated sample.

Skin scrape and hair/wool pluck samples – When sampling for ectoparasites it is recommended to collect three to five samples from the edge of active lesions. Skin scrape samples should collected onto a glass slide using a small amount of liquid paraffin. DO NOT send scalpel blades. Hair or wool pluck samples should include the hair bulb. A small amount of carefully collected material has greater diagnostic value than large quantities of randomly selected hair or fleece!