

## COMPOSITE MILK SAMPLING

### Milk Sample Collection

- Using a permanent marker, label a new sample tube with the date and cow ID.
- Keep the sample tubes closed until the sample will be collected to prevent contamination of your milk collection tubes.
- Wash your hands and put on new disposable gloves (nitrile or latex).
- Make sure that the udder and teats are clean and dry before collection.
- Pre-dip the teats with an effective germicidal teat dip and leave the dip on for 20-30 seconds.
- Wipe each teat dry with a single-use paper or cloth towel, making sure there is no teat dip left behind on the teat.
- Discard 3 to 4 streams of milk to minimize risk of contamination of the sample with bacteria in the teat canal.
- Open the sample tube immediately before the sample is taken. Do not let your hands or the teat end contact the inside of the tube, including the lid.
- Collect milk from each quarter until the sample tube is  $\frac{1}{3}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  full (about 10mls), holding the tube at an angle to prevent loose dirt or hair from falling into it.
- For composite milk samples, it is ideal to collect the same volume of milk from each quarter.
- Do not pool samples. Submit samples from individual animals only.
- Immediately close the tube once filled.
- Immediately put the sample tube in the refrigerator or on ice until delivered to your herd veterinarian.

### Additional Guidance

- Plastic tubes with tight Snap-On or screw cap lids work best for collecting milk samples. 50 mL screw cap tubes are larger in diameter and may be easier to collect into. (<https://svmbssserver.unl.edu/Portal/catalogItemDetails.zul?id=944094>)
- To avoid contamination, handle sample tubes properly to always ensure sterility. Make sure nothing but the sample milk contacts the inside of the tube.
- Check that sample tube lids are completely closed to avoid leakage.
- Place the tubes in a secondary container, such as a Ziplock bag to avoid leakage.
- Label the sample tube with a permanent marker before sample collection, as milk fat will cause the ink to smear.
- Samples should be chilled and shipped overnight with frozen gel packs. Use an insulated shipping container with submission information in a leakproof container (Ziploc/whirl pack).

### Reference

Ruegg, P., Godden, S., Lago, A., Bey, R., Leslie, K., On-Farm Culturing for Better Milk Quality, Microsoft Word - Full WDMC 2009 \_2\_  
Milk Sample Collection: Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory – University of Wisconsin-Madison