

The information in this guideline is provided as a resource to enable development of a sampling plan for your operation prior to sampling and sending your samples to PrimusLabs 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.

If interested in additional resources or materials, please contact a microbiologist at [microbiologists@primuslabs.com](mailto:microbiologists@primuslabs.com).



### Comments:

- Do not open sterile sample bag until you start sampling.
- Close the sample bag between each sub-sample in a composite sample.
- Change gloves between each sample when taking individual samples.
- 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.
- Samples should be taken just prior to sending them to the lab, as analysis should begin within 24 hours of sampling.
- Refrigerating sponges overnight prior to sampling will help keep samples within recommended temperature range during shipping.

**Note:** Sponges are generally used for sampling areas such as walls, drains, floors, and more commonly used for Qualitative Testing giving positive or negative results (e.g. *Listeria*, *Salmonella*). Sponges may be used for Quantitative Testing. Sponges are generally used for visibly soiled or where high counts are expected. For smaller or hard-to-reach areas, consider using a swab.

### Supplies:

Pre-Hydrated/Sterile Sponge sampler (in Lethen, D/E, etc.)

Cooler with Gel Ice Packs/Blue Ice

Disposable Gloves (Latex or Nitrile)

Sharpie or Permanent Marker

Customers can contact us for no-charge sampling supplies at [SupplyRequest@PrimusLabs.com](mailto:SupplyRequest@PrimusLabs.com)

## PROCEDURE

### Preparation

1. Select the area or surface to be sampled.
2. Mark the outside of the sample bag with sample identification information.
3. Proceed to sample area.

### Collecting the Sponge Samples

4. Break the seal on the sterile sample bag.
5. Put on a new pair of disposable gloves.
6. Remove a sponge from the sample bag.
7. Firmly swab an area of one square meter and return the sponge to the sample bag.
8. If taking a composite samples, close the sample bag and go to the next sample area and repeat steps 3-6 with a new sponge until all sub-samples have been taken.

### Transportation to the Laboratory

9. Place the samples into a cooler with sufficient blue ice to maintain the sample condition during transport to the laboratory facility.
10. Samples ideally need to be analyzed within 24 hours.

*The analytical results for any tested 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))*