

Appendix 1: Method of Collecting Bulk Milk Samples from the Milk Vat/Silo

1 Use the sample the tanker driver collects

This is the recommended method in most situations.

To access this very representative sample of milk, call your testing laboratory. All the main dairy companies allow BVD testing laboratories to have access to these samples. Note that access may be more restricted at the beginning and end of the season due to dairy company sampling protocols. Your testing laboratory can advise you on this.

2 Self-collection (by owner or veterinarian)

Self-collection is mainly preferred when there is more than one milk vat and it is desirable to test each vat separately. It is also recommended if you have an anomalous result and want to rule out sample contamination from Point 1 (considered a low risk). See below for further details. The tanker sample is a composite from all the milk vats.

2.1 Milk vat can be accessed from the top

- Collect the sample after the milk flow has stopped, making sure the stirrer has been on throughout milking.
- Dip a clean container a few centimetres below the milk surface and collect at least 50ml.
- Pour 10ml into a screw-cap pottle and courier the sample to the testing laboratory that day. Place the sample in a fridge until the courier collects it, and place cooler packs in the courier bag. Enclose a submission form with the sample.

2.2 The milk vat/silo is a sealed unit

- Collect the sample after the milk flow has stopped, making sure the stirrer has been on throughout milking.
- Open the milk valve so that at least two litres of milk flow out. Discard this milk, as it is from an area of dead space and isn't representative.
- Collect another 50ml and pour at least 10ml into a screw-cap pottle.
- Courier the sample to the testing laboratory that day if possible. Place the sample in a fridge until the courier collects it, and place freezer packs in the courier bag. Enclose milk submission form with the sample.

2.3 Farm with more than one milk vat/silo

Collect a sample from each vat as per the instructions above.

If there is no advantage in keeping the samples separate (e.g. if there is just a single herd), combine them into one pottle proportional to the volume of milk in each vat/silo. For example, if one vat has twice the amount of milk as the other, combine using two parts to one part.

If there are two or more herds on the farm that are milked and farmed separately, and if each herd's milk goes into a different vat, send individual vat samples. This is because it is helpful to know the BVD Ab status of each of the herds and which herd contains one or more PI animals. Make sure you label the milk samples appropriately so the results can be tracked back to the correct herd.