

**RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR COLLECTING PRODUCT
SAMPLES TO BE ANALYZED FOR *LISTERIA* SPECIES
AND/OR *LISTERIA MONOCYTOGENES***

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Providing Quality, Time Sensitive Microbiological Testing

IMPORTANT! Roesink Microbiology Laboratories does not accept Category A Infectious Substances (Biosafety Level 3 or 4 materials or any pathogen that causes highly contagious or otherwise serious disease).

Recommended Guidelines for Collecting Product Samples to be Analyzed for *Listeria* species and/or *Listeria monocytogenes*:

Note: Ensure all samples are properly collected, labeled, stored and transported and employ good record-keeping.

Introduction: Personal hygiene is essential anytime a sample is collected, whether it is in its final package or if multiple sub-samples are collected to form a final composite sample to represent the production lot. In order to prevent contamination of the sample or the surrounding products and area, aseptic technique must be employed at all times. For intact final packaged product, hands must be cleaned and sanitized before collecting a sample and gloves are to be worn. For collecting sub-samples, hands and lower arms are to be cleaned and sanitized. Sterile gloves are to be worn when collecting sub-samples. The establishment is to define the sampled lot.

- I. Intact final packaged products are preferred for the analysis of *Listeria* species and/or *Listeria monocytogenes*. The sample(s) should weigh at least 1 lb; however, 2 lbs are preferred by Roesink Laboratories. If final packaged products are unavailable for sampling, sub-samples may be sampled and consist of multiple small portions. The final composite sample must weigh at least 1 lb; however, 2 lbs are preferred. Aseptic technique must be used at all times. Knives and other sampling equipment must be thoroughly sanitized with an approved sanitizing agent. Sterile gloves are to be worn and samples are to be placed in a sterile whirl-pak bag. If supplies are needed, contact Roesink Laboratories. Countertops and/or caddies should be sanitized thoroughly prior to sampling. Wearing food safety gloves, open a sterile whirl-pak bag and place on a sanitized surface, upright in a sanitized



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- caddy, or have a co-worker hold it. (Note: Make sure the co-worker has cleaned and sanitized their hands and is wearing gloves.) Using aseptic technique, remove a sterile glove from its package and place on hand. Being careful not to touch the outside of the bag or any surrounding objects, collect sub-samples of product and place in the sterile whirl-pak bag. Close the bag by rolling the top over multiple times and bending wire tabs inward. Seal the final composite sample and place in a secondary bag (zip-lock bag) to prepare for shipment. Clearly label with the day, shifts, and times of sampling.
- II. Final packaged products may be shipped intact to Roesink Laboratories and the test sample will be prepared by a laboratory technician for testing. Final packaged products should be placed in individual zip-lock bags and be clearly labeled with the day, shifts, and times of sampling.
- III. After sampling, samples must be shipped CHILLED to the laboratory. For valid results, the following points must be ensured:
- a. Testing should begin within 24 hours of sampling; therefore the samples should be shipped the day of sampling.
 - b. Ship for priority overnight delivery.
 - c. Maintain temperature at 0 to 10°C (32 to 50°F) during transit.
 - d. Completely fill out a Roesink Laboratories Sample Submittal Form and place in a zip lock-bag in the shipping cooler. Make a copy of the form to keep on file for your records.

