

Guidelines for the Collection and Submission of Swab Samples for *Mycoplasma gallisepticum* and *M. synoviae* (MG/MS) PCR

Poultry Research and Diagnostic Laboratory, Mississippi State University

Sample quality is very important to ensure reliable test results. Please take note of the following sample collection and submission guidelines when submitting swabs for MG/MS PCR testing.

Swab type

- **Sterile, media-free (dry), sheathed / guarded swabs** (e.g. BD BBL™ CultureSwab™ Sterile, Media-free Swabs) are recommended.
- Use synthetic or semi-synthetic swabs (e.g. polyester, rayon or nylon; flocked or spun head) with a plastic shaft. **Avoid** cotton or calcium alginate swabs or swabs with wooden shafts.

Sampling site

- Trachea or choanal cleft.

Sample number

- A minimum of **30 swabs per house** of 10,000 birds is recommended.

Sampling strategy

- Sample randomly.
- Sample from different locations in the house.
 - o Front, middle and back of the house
 - o Slats, nest-boxes and scratch area
- Sample both roosters and hens in the same ratio present in the house (e.g. 1:10).
- Sample sick and healthy birds.
- Use one swab per bird sampled.

Sample submission to the laboratory

- Return swab to plastic sheath immediately after collection.
- Place swabs in properly labeled Ziploc® or Whirl-Pak® bags.
 - o It is recommended to place swabs from the front, middle and back of the house in separate bags, and label these accordingly
- Transport swabs in a styrofoam container or cooler containing cold packs (if submitted to reach the lab same day) or dry ice (for overnight delivery) [Note that the box must **not** be airtight if packaged with dry ice].
- Submit to the laboratory with completed submission form.
- Swabs for MG/MS PCR will be pooled at the laboratory (5 swabs per pool), unless otherwise requested on the submission form.

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