



## Food Sample Collection Instructions

*Instructions for collection for MICROBIOLOGY counts.*

- Use a 250 mL, screw-capped, sterile jar for liquid foods, and a sterile zip-lock bag for bulky foods like lettuce.
- For locations outside the metropolitan area, a drop-off time must be arranged with the collection centre, in order to coordinate optimal time of delivery to the laboratory.

### **BULK COOKED & UNCOOKED FOODS**

1. Sterilise a suitable ladle in boiling for 5 minutes and allow to cool in air so that the scooping end doesn't touch any surfaces.
2. Choose a representative portion of the food and using the ladle, scoop up at least 100 grams of sample.
3. If the food has to be cut using a knife and fork, this can be done as long as these are sterilised in a similar fashion as the ladle.
4. Ensure the container is leak proof and the sample has the details of your company or institution, type of food, batch number and the date and time of collection.

### **PACKAGED FOODS**

1. Send an unopened package or unit, at least 100 grams, selecting the batch number required.
2. Depending on the usual storage temperature of the food send to the lab at a similar temperature, as soon as possible.
3. For cooked foods and uncooked foods send at 5° C in esky with cold brick or bagged ice.
4. For packaged foods that are stale at room temperature send in esky without ice bricks.

**Send accompanying letter/request stating tests required, limits of detection, full sample description, and full contact details.**

**NB: Food sample portions in jars must reach the laboratory at Penrith within 24 hours of collection.**