Sampling Procedure

1. Sample after the milker is removed or at the end of milking if hand milking. It’s generally the least disruptive time to sample, and the teat ends are cleaner.

2. Bacterial cultures can only be taken directly from the cow to the sterile sample vial. Samples collected from any other container may give compromised results.

3. Label the milk vials with the sample date, the cow ID and quarter, if applicable. We will provide labels that have a place for these pieces of information.

4. Udders should be clean and dry to limit debris from contaminating the milk sample. Washing udders is not recommended unless extremely dirty.

5. Swab each teat end with a clean alcohol cotton pad. Cotton should be soaked in alcohol, but not dripping wet, just thoroughly damp. You do not want the teat end dripping with alcohol at the time of sampling.
   - 1st disinfect the two teats furthest from you, then the two teats closest to you. Be careful not to brush your arm across the teats and contaminate them.
   - Collect several squirts from each teat into the vial. Filling the vial full is not necessary and may crack vial during freezing.

6. Do not touch inner surface of vial, cap or top, or set the cap down. A couple of suggested ways to hold the vial are:
   - Grasp the cap (thread end down) with your pinky finger against the palm of your hand and hold the vial upright, or…
   - Grasp the cap in between the thumb and pointer finger and hold the vial upright.

7. Hold the vial at a 45° angle while collecting milk from the teat. Do not touch the teat with the open sample vial.

8. After reattaching the lid, look for obvious contamination (debris) in the sample. Throw away the vial and resample the cow if the sample is bad.


10. Samples should be shipped overnight via FedEx or UPS, not US Postal Service. Place vials in a clean bag and pack into an insulated shipper with ice packs and packaging to protect the vial(s). Do not ship on Fridays!

Finished Product Sampling

1. Sample should be taken from milk that is “ready to consume”, i.e. it has been filtered, chilled and poured into the final jar.

2. Sample pour should be done on a clean surface, using the larger 50ml vial that came with your intro kit. As before, do not touch the inside of the vial lid or inside of the tube.

3. Simply pour milk from the jar into the vial. Avoid touching the jar to the edge of the vial. If working at a kitchen counter or other clean area, the lid may be placed upside up on the counter.

4. Freeze the sample with the cow samples and pack and ship as described above.