

APHA Ewe Mastitis Bacteriology Project



Calweton Vets would like to encourage you to take advantage of **FREE** testing for ewe mastitis bacteriology during the 2023/2024 lambing season.

APHA Starcross is carrying out the bacteriology testing free of charge, and we have taken the decision as a practice to further support this by making no charge for the cost of submitting and reporting samples.

Farms can submit up to three samples from each lambing cohort of ewes / ewe lambs throughout the lambing season. Samples can be submitted between November 2023 and May 2024. **Samples must be collected aseptically. This is essential, as results from contaminated samples will be misleading!**

Please follow the protocol below:

1. Wash and dry your hands thoroughly. Apply a pair of clean disposable gloves
2. If, and only if, the teat is obviously dirty: wash teat and dry thoroughly
3. Discard the first two draws of milk
4. Clean **end** of teat using either a piece of cotton wool dampened with surgical spirit
5. The teat should be visibly clean (check cotton wool for any residue); repeat if needed
6. To take the sample:
 - a. Open sample container (ideally use a sterile universal pot) making sure to keep the lid clean – do not place open-side down
 - b. Hold sample container at an angle to teat
 - c. Discard a further draw of milk
 - d. Fill sample container with as much milk as possible – but it is better to submit a half-full pot than contaminate the contents! A teaspoonful is sufficient
 - e. Replace lid carefully
7. Label sample container – Include ewe ID, quarter, date, name of farm and surname
8. Remove gloves and wash your hands thoroughly

Sample Storage

Bring samples to the practice as soon as possible after collection (please refrigerate overnight/over the weekend). Samples can be stored in the fridge for a few days.

Alternatively samples can be batched and held frozen for postage as a single submission if required. **Please highlight on the submission form if the samples have been frozen.**

When you bring samples to the practice, we will submit them to APHA Starcross via ADTS.

Please ensure we know the samples are for the suckler ewe mastitis project as we need to state this on the form, in order for them to be subsidised!!