

SAMPLE TAKING PROTOCOL

Testing for Life

Equi Feed

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Definitions

Sample	Final material of the sampling procedure; it consists of several tufts of forage obtained from different bales, in total about 250 grams
Haylage	Wrapped forage <70% Dry Matter (DM)
Hay	Unwrapped forage or wrapped forage > 70% DM

When to take a sample?

- For bales of haylage, the best time to take a sample is 4 to 6 weeks after the bales have been made. A hay sample can be taken shortly after collecting the bales.
- Do not harvest and/or sample the forage within 6 weeks after fertilizing the field.

How to take a sample?

Preparations before sampling

- Make sure that you collect a representative sample that covers the quality of the whole batch.
- When sampling small bales of hay, use at least 5 bales to compile the sample. When analysing large bales of hay or haylage, use at least 2 bales to compile the sample.
- Gather your material:
 - Clean bucket
 - Plastic bag
 - Cardboard box
 - Completed order form with the correct email address, personal details and information about the sample, analysis, and type of material (hay or haylage)
 - How to test the DM content of your forage? Take a tuft of forage in your hand and squeeze it tight. Is your hand moist? Then your forage has a DM content of <70% and it is called haylage

What/where to sample?

- The analysis results of the sample should be representative of the complete batch that has been sampled. Therefore, the sample should be taken from various places and depths, from several bales within the batch. Make sure you get the whole strain of forage without selecting to include all material in the sample (leaf and stem of the plant).

Sampling method

- When sampling wrapped bales of forage, make an opening inside the plastic so that a forage sample can be taken. When making a hole inside the plastic, take into account that you have to re-seal the plastic after taking the sample to maintain the quality of the forage.
- Pull tufts of hay from the batch of hay or haylage and put it in the bucket. Make sure you get the whole strain of forage without selecting to include all material in the sample (leaf and stem of the plant) to get a representative sample. It is important to pull tufts on different randomly chosen places and various depths from several bales of the batch meaning not to take tufts only from the surface.

- Take the plastic bag.
- Fill the plastic bag with 250 grams of forage. In case of haylage with a very low DM, fill the bag with more forage (maximum 400 grams).
- Put some pressure on the plastic bag to release as much air as possible from the bag.
- Tie the plastic bag shut.

After sampling

- After taking a wrapped forage sample, it is important to re-seal the bales immediately with tape after taking the sample to maintain the quality of the forage.
- Put the plastic bag with a correct completed order form in a cardboard box.
- Write the address on top of the box.
- Bring your package to a package delivery service as soon as possible.
- Your package will be brought to our laboratory, within 10 working days after receiving your sample at our laboratory you will receive the results of the analysis on your email.

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