



NQAC

Nestlé Quality Assurance Center

ALLERGEN SWAB COLLECTION

Below you will find information to aid you in requesting swabbing materials from NQAC, collecting swabs for allergen cleaning validation, and shipping completed swabs to NQAC for analysis.

Requesting Swabbing Materials from NQAC Dublin

NQAC provides the following Materials:

- Neogen Allergen Environmental Swabs (part # 8432S)
- Allergen spike solution

***The spike is specific to the allergen being tested. The expiration date is printed on the vial. Each vial can only be used for 1 swab.**

Available Allergen Spike Solutions:

Milk - Pecan - Soy - Wheat - Egg - Almond - Peanut - Walnut - Sesame - Mustard

To request swabbing materials, contact USNQACALLERGENS@internal.nestle.com and grpcsndub@us.nestle.com while providing the following information:

1. Name of facility
2. Name of person receiving package
3. Shipping address
4. Phone Number
5. NQAC Customer ID Number
6. How many spike vials of each allergen are needed
7. How many Neogen swabs are needed

Storing Allergen Swabs Upon Receipt:

The allergen spike vials **must** be stored in the freezer immediately upon receipt. They must remain in the freezer until directly before use.

If kept frozen, the spike solutions are good until the expiry date listed on the label.

Interference check swab: Unused swab used to swab an area adjacent to the sampling area and subsequently spiked with an amount of allergen that is close to the detection limit and analyzed. This control checks for interference from traces of cleaning solutions that might be present on the surface of the equipment. This check is required because some cleaning solutions can cause false negative results.

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Collecting Allergen Swabs

Definitions:

Blank swab: Unused swab analyzed as a check for false positives or contamination.

Positive control swab: Unused swab spiked with an amount of allergen that is close to the detection limit for the test and analyzed. This control checks that the test materials are functioning and that the allergen could be detected if it were present at the detection limit.

Interference check swab: Unused swab used to swab an area adjacent to the sampling area and subsequently spiked with an amount of allergen that is close to the detection limit and analyzed. This control checks for interference from traces of cleaning solutions that might be present on the surface of the equipment. This check is required because some cleaning solutions can cause false negative results.

All three of the above mentioned swabs are mandatory for every submission. If any of the three swabs are not submitted the test will need to be considered as invalid.

Swabbing Procedure Cautions:

***In addition to the materials provided by NQAC Dublin, Neogen Allergen Environmental Swabs and Allergen Spike solutions, you will need Sterile Deionized (DI) water and disposable Pasteur pipettes to collect swabs.**

****If you are using materials not provided by NQAC for your Allergen Submissions**

We strongly recommend only using Neogen Allergen Environmental Swabs, product #8432S, as these swabs are specifically designed for capturing trace levels of allergens. Use of any other type of swab may compromise the integrity of the results.

- *Sponge or gauze swabs tend not to release protein/allergen residues into the extraction solution.*
- *More cost effective swabs may not remove protein from equipment surfaces, and may not readily release protein into the extraction solution when testing.*

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Swabbing Procedure:

1. Set aside three swabs for quality control for every batch of swabs collected – Interference, blank and positive.
2. Remove two allergen spike vials from the freezer 15-20 minutes before use. Keep the spike vials separate from the swabbing area to avoid cross-contamination. Each vial can only be used for one swab.
3. To collect a line swab sample, remove the swab from its tube and use it to swab an area of the equipment to be tested. If the equipment is dry, add 2-3 drops of sterile water to the swab using a disposable Pasteur pipet. Swab in a zigzag motion, covering the entire area 10 x 10 cm (4 x 4 in) swabbing area is suggested.
4. Immediately after swabbing return the swab to the tube. Add 2-3 drops of sterile DI water to the swab tube to ensure the swab stays moist during shipping. Mark the tube with the sample identity.
5. Interference check swab - Take one of the three reserved swabs, mark it “Interference Check”. Remove it from its tube. If the other line samples were moistened, moisten the interference swab by adding 2-3 drops of sterile water to the swab using a disposable Pasteur pipet. Use it to swab an area of the equipment adjacent to an area where one of the sample swabs was taken. **Do not swab an area that was already swabbed.** Spike the swab by swabbing around the spike solution vial (bottom, side and top). Make sure all solutions in the vial are used. Return the swab to its tube. Add 2-3 drops of sterile DI water to the swab tube to ensure the swab stays moist during shipping. **Keep the spike vials separate from the swabbing area to avoid cross-contamination.**
6. Positive control - mark the second reserved swab “Positive Control”. Remove it from its tube. If the other line samples were moistened, moisten the positive control swab by adding 2-3 drops of sterile water to the swab using a disposable Pasteur pipet. Spike the swab by swabbing around the spike solution vial (bottom, side and top). Make sure all solutions in the vial are used. Return the swab to its tube. Add 2-3 drops of sterile DI water to the swab tube to ensure the swab stays moist during shipping. Keep the spike vials separate from the swabbing area to avoid cross-contamination.
7. Blank swab – mark the third reserved swab “Blank”. If the other line samples were moistened, moisten the blank swab by adding 2-3 drops of sterile water to the swab using a plastic Pasteur pipet. Add 2-3 drops of sterile DI water to the swab tube to ensure the swab stays moist during shipping.

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Shipping Instructions:

The swabs will need to be sent to the following address:

NQAC Dublin
6625 Eiterman Rd.
Dublin, OH 43016

In order to receive the most accurate results possible, ship the swabs within 24 hours of collection using ice packs to ensure that the swabs stay cold. Please be sure to include an Analysis Request Form indicating which allergens will be tested.

NQAC can perform the following allergen testing on-site:

- Milk
- Gluten
- Peanut
- Soy
- Egg
- Almond
- Mustard
- β -Lactoglobulin (BLG)
- Crustacean
- Hazelnut
- Pecan
- Sesame

If the allergen you would like to have tested does not appear on the above list please contact Customer Service. We will work to have your request accommodated.

Guide For Interpreting Your Results:

All swab samples will be tested for a specific allergen.

1. The blank swab must return a negative result. If it is positive or if a blank swab was not run, the test is invalid.

2. The positive control swab must be positive. If it is negative or if a positive control swab was not run, the test is invalid.

3. The interference must be positive. If it is negative, this indicates that traces of cleaning solution are present and are interfering with the detection of allergen. This means that there is a chance for false negative results on the test samples and results must be viewed with suspicion.

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