

## Footrot – collection of samples for laboratory diagnosis

### MATERIALS REQUIRED

Footrot transport medium  
(Available from the Animal Health Laboratory)  
Sterile swabs

### SELECTING ANIMALS FOR TESTING

Select animals in early stages of infection

### NUMBER OF ANIMALS TO BE TESTED

For flock checks, sample six typical sheep in the mob.

### SAMPLING PROCEDURE

1. Examine affected foot. Remove debris to expose inter-digital lesion and / or pare hoof to expose area of under-running.
2. Using a sterile swab, scrape material from the active footrot lesion.
3. Insert the swab as far as possible into the transport medium before breaking off the stick. (Ensure a small length of the stick remains above the surface of the medium.)
4. Replace the lid of transport media and screw down firmly. Label the bottle.
5. Use a new swab, for each foot sampled.

**Note:** If the Footrot organism is isolated, it may take up to four weeks to determine elastase activity. Elastase activity determines whether the footrot organisms isolated are virulent, intermediate or benign.

### TRANSPORTING SAMPLES

Pack in an esky **without** ice and send specimens to Animal Health Laboratory as soon as possible, ensuring that they arrive within 24 hours of collection.

### SUBMITTING SAMPLES

Submit samples to:

Animal Health Laboratory  
NRE Tas  
165 Westbury Road  
Prospect TAS 7250

P: 03 6777 2111

E: [specimenreception@nre.tas.gov.au](mailto:specimenreception@nre.tas.gov.au)

For more Footrot information:

<https://nre.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/sheep/lameness-in-sheep-or-goats>

For more information about the Animal Health Laboratory:

[www.nre.tas.gov.au/AHLabs](http://www.nre.tas.gov.au/AHLabs)