



PACKAGING CONSULTANTS INTERNATIONAL



Laboratory Certificate #36-B-00155

January 2022

TO: PCI Customers

RE: Environmental Monitoring Swab Sampling Update

This letter is to inform you that Packaging Consultant International's (PCI) has changed vendors for the swab samplers we provide to our customers upon request for environmental monitoring. As a result, we no longer provide Fisherbrand Liquid Stuarts transport system for sampling and are now utilizing World BioProducts PUR-Blue™ High-Capacity (HiCap) Neutralizing Broth samplers. We now offer two types of the PUR-Blue™ swab depending on the microbial analyses desired:

- BLU-5HC – Indicator Organism sampling (ex. total bacteria, coliform, mold/yeast)
- BLU-HC-P – Pathogen sampling (ex. Listeria & Salmonella)

As a result, the quantity of each swab type will now need to be differentiated when ordering supplies using our updated Supply Request Form. As a reminder, separate swabs are needed for Listeria & Salmonella species testing. However, we can analyze bacteria, coliform, mold & yeast all from the same indicator organism swab sample.

The PUR-Blue™ swab samplers possess a medical grade polyurethane foam tip that resists tearing and fraying, in addition to a strong and flexible shaft, allowing users to vigorously scrub surfaces to disrupt biofilm and lift organisms during sample collection. The HiCap broth is an advanced sample collection solution designed specifically for food safety, that improves the recovery of microorganisms from surfaces and unlike other collection solutions, it maintains the viability of stressed and injured cells for up to 72 hours after collection.

The PUR-Blue™ swabs are like our previous swabs in that they can be stored refrigerated or at room temperature prior to sampling. Acceptable storage temperature range is 2-30°C. Please take note of the expiration date(s) printed on the swab tubes upon receipt when ordering quantities for multiple samplings throughout the year. Most often there will be approximately two years of shelf-life remaining upon delivery.

The new swab samplers require the excess liquid in the swab tip to be pressed against the inside of the tube to release some of the broth back into the main portion of broth. When sampling, the swab manufacturer recommends swabbing vertically, horizontally, and diagonally over the sample surface. Typical swab sampling area is approximately 100 cm² (or 4"x4"). All surface areas will not necessarily be flat, but care should be taken to swab a similar surface area for each location. Sampled surfaces should also be cleaned and sanitized after swabbing since the broth contains nutrients that are conducive to microbial growth on surfaces. Additional instructions can be found from the manufacturer at [PUR-Blue™ swabs | World Bioproducts - WORLD BIOPRODUCTS](#).

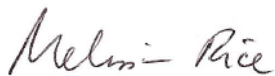
Unlike our Fisherbrand swabs, the PUR-Blue™ swabs must now be shipped back to us in an insulated shipper with ice packs to minimize the potential for exponential microbial replication

and extend the lag phase of this cycle during transit due to the neutralizing broth. (We currently provide these supplies with orders free of charge). Ice packs must be refrozen upon receipt to maintain chilled temperatures for the return shipment back to PCI after sampling. Like our prior protocol, swabs should be shipped back to us using an overnight courier service the same day that they are sampled. However, the swab broth does now guarantee microbial for up to 72 hours from sampling in the event of transit delays as long as the swabs have sufficient ice packs.

Changes will also be found in our reporting of indicator organisms due to the dilution during analyses using the new swab samplers. Previously, the low limit of reporting was "<1" when no microbes were observed, but now the low limit for reporting will be "<10" which will still mean no microbial growth for applicable indicator organisms was observed. There are no changes in the reporting format for Listeria & Salmonella species. They will remain as "Not Found" or "Presumptive Positive" as applicable.

We look forward to working with you as we work through these changes. Please contact us at customerservice@pcilabs.com with any questions.

Sincerely,



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