



**Our vision:**

To excel as a science-based regulator, trusted and respected by Canadians and the international community.

**Our mission:**

Dedicated to safeguarding food, animals and plants, which enhances the health and well-being of Canada's people, environment and economy.

**Key Learning Points**

- Regulations for Transport of Rabies Suspect Samples
- Selection of Appropriate Samples
- Packaging
- Labeling

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# RABIES TESTING AT THE CFIA: PACKAGING OF SAMPLES



## CANADIAN FEDERAL LEGISLATION

The *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act and Regulations* are administered by Transport Canada. Information on shipping infectious substances can be found in the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods (TDG) Bulletin*: <https://tc.canada.ca/sites/default/files/2024-11/shipping-infectious-substances.pdf>

***It is the responsibility of the submitter to comply with all applicable federal, provincial and territorial legislation related to shipping dangerous goods.***

## GENERAL COMMENTS

**This document is not meant to replace a proper training program for TDG. It is for reference purposes only for the submission of rabies samples.**

Please inquire directly with couriers for information on their specific terms and conditions related to shipping dangerous goods.

## SELECTION OF MATERIAL TO SUBMIT FOR TESTING

For most animals:

- ⇒ submit the entire head.
- ⇒ include cervical spinal cord if the skull has been damaged, e.g., shot in the head

For small animals (<500 g):

- ⇒ submit the entire carcass to aid species identification (e.g., bats).

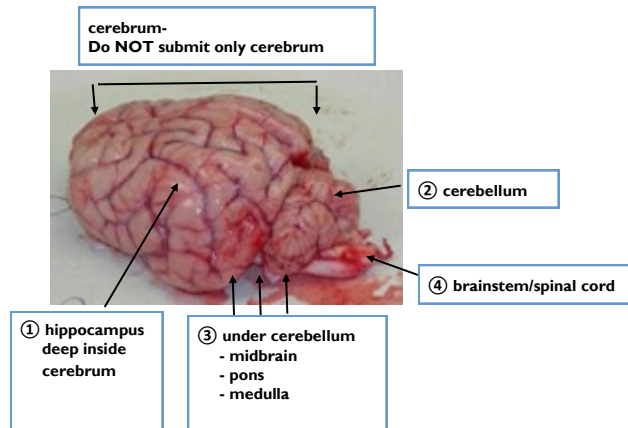
For large animals (>100 kg) and all livestock:

- ⇒ submit the entire brain and portion of cervical spinal cord;
- ⇒ If entire brain can not be submitted, collect portions of brain tissue bilaterally from the cerebellum, hippocampus and brain stem.



## MATERIAL NECESSARY FOR TESTING

**SUBMISSION OF THE ENTIRE BRAIN IS REQUIRED TO MAXIMIZE DIAGNOSTIC SENSITIVITY.**



## SAMPLE PREPARATION

### DO:

- Ensure that animals are dead before packaging
- Spray with insecticide, if infested with ticks or fleas
- Remove maggots
- Remove any needles or darts
- Make level cuts during disarticulation
- Leave the head intact and do not remove skin, ears, or snout
- Note quills, jagged bone fragments, possible bullets or shot on the submission form in "Submitter Comments"
- Remove excess bags, or ones that are opaque, before packaging

- Use absorbent material between the primary and secondary package, and as cushioning in the outer container
- Use rigid ice packs
- Ship sample as soon as possible after collection

### DON'T:

- Submit whole bodies of skunks
- Wrap brain with absorbent material or place into whirl-pak bags
- Use gel sachets as absorbent material
- Use wet ice, frozen water bottles, soft gel packs or dry ice for cooling sample
- Use Styrofoam or other granular packing material

## TEMPERATURE CONDITIONS

### THERE IS NO NEED TO FREEZE SAMPLES PRIOR TO SHIPMENT.

To ensure timely results, samples submitted should be refrigerated, and not frozen. Samples received frozen must be completely thawed before testing can begin, which can delay results by a day or more.

INCLUDE RIGID ICE PACKS TO KEEP THE SAMPLE COOL DURING SHIPPING, DEPENDING ON OUTDOOR TEMPERATURES.

Winter (<5°C): **DO NOT** use ice packs

Fall/Spring (5-30°C): **USE** ice packs

Summer (>30°C): **USE** additional ice packs



## PACKAGING MATERIALS

### ○ PRIMARY PACKAGE

- ⇒ Consists of 2 plastic bags  
**OR**  
1 plastic container and 1 plastic bag
- ⇒ Choose size appropriate for sample
- ⇒ Clear
- ⇒ For open end bag, knot tightly to make leak-proof
- ⇒ For bag with zipper closure, zip closed and fold over and seal with moisture-resistant tape
- ⇒ Plastic container must be leak-proof

### ○ UNIQUE SAMPLE IDENTIFIER

- ⇒ Durable, adhesive label, printed with indelible ink  
**OR**  
Commercially-purchased identification tags

### ○ SECONDARY PACKAGE

- ⇒ Single plastic bag,  
**OR**  
For air transport, must be pressure compliant to 95 kPa (disposable single bag OR disposal 2 part bag OR reusable vessel)

### ⇒ Absorbent material

- ⇒ Absorbent material must be placed between the primary and secondary package

### ○ OUTER SHIPPING CONTAINER

- ⇒ Sturdy fiberboard box
- ⇒ One surface must be 100mm x 100mm
- ⇒ Outer packaging must satisfy PI 650
- ⇒ Rigid ice packs

### ○ LABELS AND DOCUMENTS

- ⇒ Rabies Sample Submission form and clear plastic bag
- ⇒ Address labels - Shipper and Recipient
- ⇒ Label with proper shipping name "BIOLOGICAL SUBSTANCE, CATEGORY B" or "EXEMPT ANIMAL SPECIMEN"
- ⇒ Dangerous Goods Safety Mark, UN3373 diamond-on-point label, if applicable (Category B samples).



## EXAMPLE OF ADDRESS LABEL - SHIPPER AND RECIPIENT ADDRESS

⇒ **USE MINIMUM 16 POINT FONT, BOLDFACE TYPE, INCLUDE TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

<b>YOUR COMPLETE NAME</b>	<b>R-UNIT, OTTAWA LABORATORY FALLOWFIELD</b>
<b>YOUR EMPLOYER</b>	<b>CANADIAN FOOD INSPECTION AGENCY</b>
<b>YOUR STREET ADDRESS</b>	<b>3851 FALLOWFIELD ROAD</b>
<b>CITY, PROVINCE POSTAL CODE</b>	<b>OTTAWA, ON K2J 4S1</b>
<b>YOUR PHONE NUMBER</b>	<b>(343) 212-0340</b>

## LEAKING OR DAMAGED PARCELS

When a parcel is received damaged or leaking, potentially resulting in the accidental release of the sample from the packaging, CFIA internal policy is to notify our management, and the consigner (the submitter).

Note, that the carrier may also notify the provincial authority (usually police) and Canutec 613-966-6666.

Ensure that the sample is packaged according to all relevant Transportation of

Dangerous Goods Regulations for the safety of all involved in the shipping and receiving process.

**THE SHIPPER IS  
SOLELY  
RESPONSIBLE FOR  
PROPERLY  
PACKAGING THE  
SAMPLE.**



## CHECKLIST for Packaging

**For further information,  
contact:**

R-Unit, Ottawa Laboratory  
Fallowfield  
Canadian Food Inspection Agency  
3851 Fallowfield Road  
Ottawa ON K2J 4S1

Mon-Fri 8 am—4 pm ET

Phone: 343-212-0340  
Fax: 343-212-0202  
E-mail: [cfa.rabieseast-  
rageest.acia@inspection.gc.ca](mailto:cfa.rabieseast-<br/>rageest.acia@inspection.gc.ca)

**We're on the Web**  
[inspection.canada.ca](http://inspection.canada.ca)

### IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SUBMITTER TO FOLLOW ALL APPLICABLE TRANSPORT CANADA REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES.

Keep sample in refrigerator prior to packaging. Freezing should be avoided as it may delay testing. If the sample is already frozen, ship it without ice packs.

★ Each sample must have its OWN unique sample identification number and Rabies Sample Submission form.

- ① \_\_\_\_ Place head/specimen into the **PRIMARY PACKAGE** as per **TDG requirements**.
- ② \_\_\_\_ Attach **UNIQUE SAMPLE IDENTIFIER** to the primary package.
- ③ \_\_\_\_ Wrap the primary package with **ABSORBENT MATERIAL**.
- ④ \_\_\_\_ Place into **SECONDARY PACKAGE** as per **TDG requirements**.
- ⑤ \_\_\_\_ Fill out **RABIES SAMPLE SUBMISSION** form online and submit electronically. Print the completed form, place into a plastic bag and secure to secondary package with tape.
- ⑥ \_\_\_\_ Place absorbent material into **OUTER SHIPPING CONTAINER** to cushion sample.
- ⑦ \_\_\_\_ Place sufficient **RIGID ICE PACKS** so that sample remains cold/cool for at least 48 hours. Do not use ice packs during winter months (<5°C) or if the animal head is frozen.
- ⑧ \_\_\_\_ Place secondary package inside box and add additional cushioning material.
- ⑨ \_\_\_\_ Seal box securely.
- ⑩ \_\_\_\_ Apply appropriate **LABELS** to the box per **TDG requirements**.