

**United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology
Microbiological Data Program**

SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 1 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
Revision: Original	Replaces: N/A	Effective: 4/29/09

1. Purpose:

To establish general procedures for the collection of special samples during national or regional emergency events that require participation and or support from the USDA/AMS Microbiological Data Program (MDP).

2. Scope:

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) shall be followed by participating States that collect and ship samples for MDP.

3. Outline of Procedures:

- 5.1 Definitions
- 5.2 Notifications
- 5.3 Sampling Procedures
- 5.4 Collection of Sample Information

4. References:

- Modifications to Routine Sampling Procedures drafted as a result of the *Salmonella saintpaul* foodborne outbreak, June–September 2008, and the *Salmonella* foodborne outbreak in peanut butter, first and second quarters, 2009.

5. Specific Procedures:

5.1 Definitions

5.1.1 Emergency Sampling Event/Plan: A sampling event/plan may be termed an “emergency” when a modification to the standard sampling program plan is necessitated by a current or evolving situation as reported by a government and/or news agency (e.g., foodborne outbreak, intentional contamination incident, etc.)

**United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology
Microbiological Data Program**

SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 2 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
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5.1.2 Special Samples: Non-routine MDP samples are defined as those that may differ in commodity type, size, number, or location of collection from the samples regularly collected for the MDP programs.

5.1.3 Program-Wide Sampling: All States may, at the discretion of the Monitoring Programs Office (MPO), become involved in the collection of special samples because the scope of emergency conditions is broad or because the source or point of contamination is unknown.

5.1.4 Regional Sampling: Selected States may, at the discretion of the MPO, become involved in the collection of special samples because the scope of emergency conditions is known or suspected to be limited to a specific area or areas of the country.

5.2 Notifications

5.2.1 In response to a national or regional emergency, MPO will set up a regional or program-wide sampling plan based on the most recent information from other federal agencies and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

5.2.2 MPO will notify the appropriate sample collection States to enact specified changes to normal sampling schedules as soon as it is determined that MDP will become involved in the collection of special samples. MPO will work closely with the participating States to ensure that new workloads are appropriate for collection capacities.

5.2.3 MPO will notify MDP laboratories and assess capacity to ensure that an adequate type and number of analyses can be performed according to the new emergency sampling plan.

5.2.4 Routine and special samples may be rerouted to different laboratories based on the heaviest collection locations.

United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology
Microbiological Data Program

SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 3 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
Revision: Original	Replaces: N/A	Effective: 4/29/09

5.2.5 Collection schemes are subject to further modifications depending on new developments occurring during the course of the emergency. In such cases, MPO will work closely with the appropriate States to implement any necessary changes.

5.2.6 An emergency sampling event will remain in effect until States are notified by MPO to return to their routine collection plan.

5.3 Sampling Procedures

Because emergency conditions are unique in source, scope, density, and timing, each emergency sampling event will also require unique procedures. For each emergency sampling event, MPO will distribute information and instructions on:

5.3.1 Changes in sample commodity(ies), sample amounts, collection frequencies, collection locations, and special e-SIF instructions. All supporting documents will be revised and distributed as necessary.

5.3.2 Changes in specific sampling schedules for routine commodities which may include temporary halts for regularly collected commodities to accommodate emergency needs. States may be requested to post new schedules to MPO's Extranet site.

5.3.3 Changes in current MDP Sampling SOP procedures. Unless otherwise directed by MPO, all other MDP Sampling SOP procedures shall be followed during an emergency sampling event.

5.4 Collection of Sample Information

5.4.1 It is important that any possible trace-back information be properly and correctly recorded. Sample collectors shall ensure that all fields of the Sample Information Form (SIF) are completed. No SIF fields should be left blank. [Refer to MDP SAMP PROC-04 for detailed SIF instructions.]

**United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology
Microbiological Data Program**

SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 4 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
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5.4.2 Because the likelihood of sampling at proxy sites (retail stores) may increase during a national emergency, the sample collector should obtain and record any additional or other relevant trace-back information in the Comments field of the SIF.

5.4.3 If the desired information is not readily available from the box/container from which the sample was collected, attempts should be made to obtain the sample information from the vendor or store manager directly.

**United States Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology
Microbiological Data Program**

SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 5 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
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Jo Kraemer

4/29/09

Prepared by: Jo Kraemer
Sampling Manager, Microbiological Data Program
8609 Sudley Road, Suite 206
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 330-2300

Date

Diana Haynes

4/29/09

Approved By: Diana Haynes
Technical Director, Microbiological Data Program
8609 Sudley Road, Suite 206
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 330-2300

Date

Martha Lamont

4/29/09

Approved By: Martha Lamont
Program Administrative Director, Microbiological Data Program
8609 Sudley Road, Suite 206
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 330-2300

Date

**United States Department of Agriculture
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SOP No: MDP SAMP PROC-05		Page 6 of 6
Title: Sampling Procedures During National or Regional Emergency Events		
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Original

- Established procedures for sampling in national or regional emergencies