

Considerations for Slurry and Manure Sampling

The Importance of Accurate Sampling

The reliability of the results and interpretation depends, ultimately, upon the accuracy of the sampling. Sampling can be considered in terms of three simple stages:

1. Taking a representative sample.
2. Supplying all necessary field and background information.
3. Correct packing and immediate dispatch to the laboratory.

The nutrient content of slurry and manure is not evenly distributed, but it is vital that any sample is representative of the entire store. To ensure this, it is important to follow the sampling instructions as below.

To provide an accurate and appropriate interpretation, complete sample details, including manure or slurry type, should be recorded. The laboratory will transfer these details to the report to make sure records are complete.

Samples can be sent to the laboratory using the 1st class postage paid envelope service or, for larger batches, a courier collection can be arranged by calling 01759 305116 or emailing ypl.laboratory@yara.com. Please also contact the laboratory if you require any further sampling supplies.

The advice below is drawn from Leaflet 3 of '**Guidance for Farmers in Nitrate Vulnerable Zones**', Defra 2009.

For slurry:

- At least 5 sub-samples, each of 2 litres, should be taken
- The sub-sample must be taken from a slurry vessel, and; if reasonably practicable, the slurry must be thoroughly mixed before the sub-samples are taken, and each sub sample must be taken from a different location
- If a tanker used for spreading is fitted with a suitable valve, the sub-samples may be taken while spreading, and each sub-sample must be taken at intervals during the spreading.
- The sub-samples must be poured into a larger container, stirred thoroughly and a sample must be taken from that container and poured into a smaller clean container to provide the sample for analysis.

For solid manures:

- The samples should be taken from a manure heap.
- At least 10 sub-samples of 1kg each must be taken, each from a different location in a heap.
- Each sub-sample must be taken at least 0.5 metres from the surface of the heap.
- If sub-samples are being collected to calculate compliance with the whole farm limit for pigs and poultry, four samples must be taken in a calendar year (one in each quarter) from manure heaps not more than 12 mths old.
- The sub-samples must be placed on a clean, dry tray or sheet.
- Any lumps must be broken up and the sub-samples must be thoroughly mixed.
- A representative sample of 1 - 2kg is then to be sent for analysis.