

How to Collect Water Samples

The key to the success of a water sampling program is proper handling and preservation of samples.

Sample Containers

Use only clean plastic containers for holding water samples

No glass

No pesticide, surfactant, or fertilizer containers

The container and cap should be rinsed at least 3 times prior to sampling, with the water to be sampled.

Sampling

Samples from streams should be collected from running water, well downstream from tributaries.

Collect from the center of the stream, where the velocity is average and chances of solids settling is minimal.

Samples from ponds or pits should be collected when they are in use for irrigation.

Samples should be taken at various depths.

Well water should be collected after the well has been pumped for a period of 1 to 2 hours.

Handling and Storage

Fill to the top of the bottle to limit air exposure

Squeeze air out of bottle before putting on lid.

Seal sample bottle tightly

Ship to lab within 24 hours

If sample is to be held longer than 24 hours, keep refrigerated.