EZ Reach™ Sponge Sampler Instructions

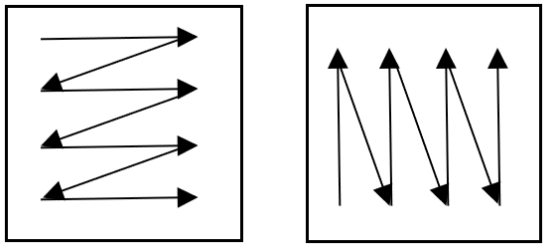
1. Label the sample bag with a permanent marker.

Note: If sampling for the presence/absence testing of pathogens, a single sponge is required for **each** specific pathogen test. Multiple quantitative indicator tests (e.g., Aerobic plate count, Coliform/*E.coli*, Yeast/Mold) can be performed from a single sponge.

2. Open the bag by tearing off the top of the plastic strip and using the white pull tabs.

3. Keeping hands outside the bag, push the sponge handle out of the bag. Grasp the handle and remove the sponge from the bag. **Be careful not to touch inside of the bag.**

4. Press the sponge portion of the device with firm pressure to ensure full contact with the desired sampling surface. Move the sponge back and forth in vertical direction while applying firm pressure. Flip the sponge and move the sponge back and forth in horizontal direction across the same surface area while applying firm pressure.



5. After sampling is complete, insert the **sponge portion only** into the prelabeled sample bag.

6. With your hands outside the bag, pinch the sponge while turning the handle in a counter-clockwise direction.

7. Drop the separated sponge into the bottom of the bag and discard the handle. Roll down the top of the bag several times and fold over the wire tie to securely close.

8. Collect all sponge samples in an insulated cooler with ice packs and ship overnight to EMSL Analytical, Inc. Sponge samples should not come in direct contact with the ice packs and should ideally be kept at 0-8°C (not frozen) during transportation.

Additional reminders:

- Ensure that appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is used and Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs) are strictly adhered to during sampling activities.
- Ensure that the sponge samples do not come in direct contact with finished product to avoid potential for cross-contamination. The use of a secondary barrier container is recommended.
- During sampling activity, be mindful of the sequence of sampling activity as moving sponge samples from the raw food area into the finished product handling area can increase potential for cross-contamination.
- If sampling for quantitative tests (e.g., Aerobic Plate Count, Yeast/Mold, Coliform/*E.coli*) using Petrifilm methods, ensure that the sponges are hydrated with HiCap Neutralizing broth or letheen broth. Neutralizing buffer and D/E neutralizing broth contain chemical compounds that can interfere with Petrifilm methods.
- Verify that a completed chain of custody form (COC) is included in the container and that the sample descriptions exactly match the labels written on the samples.