

2.1 Sampling Introduction

This section describes procedures for the collection of samples for both lot and facility inspections. Note that State, Tribal, inter-jurisdictional, and foreign aquatic animal health protection guidelines, policies, and /or regulations may require sample collection procedures that differ from this manual. The procedures in this manual provide an acceptable minimum standard for conducting fish health inspections in the absence of guidance from other policies or regulations as listed above.

Size and age group classifications, lot definitions, sample size, general sampling considerations, and a recommended protocol for sample collection are also included. Screening and confirmatory tests to be run on the samples collected are provided, in detail, for each pathogen in subsequent chapters of this handbook (see table of contents).

The following necropsy and sample collection protocol applies specifically to the pathogens included in this manual. A brief description of clinical signs of the diseases caused by these pathogens is provided in this manual. However, references such as the AFS/FHS Blue Book (2004 Edition) and others listed herein should be consulted for more detailed descriptions and information.

It is the responsibility of the inspector to evaluate the facility and select the appropriate fish from which to collect samples, check the policies and regulations of the jurisdictions requiring the inspection, and coordinate sample submission requirements with the laboratory that will be performing the assays. This will ensure recognition of the inspection results by the competent authorities. A guideline for inspection preparation is provided in Section 2, 2.2.A “Guidelines for Preparation of a Fish Health Inspection.”

The inspection criteria outlined in this chapter is based on the testing of a statistically valid number of individuals to assess the health of the entire population and is intended only to provide information for risk management involving the movement of fish from one location to another. The lack of detection of a particular pathogen resulting from an inspection indicates only that the pathogen was not isolated by the methods used on the individual fish examined on the date of sampling. It does not indicate that every fish in that population is free of that pathogen or will be free of that pathogen at any time in the future.

DISCLAIMER: Mention of specific brands or manufacturers does not warrant endorsement by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and/or the United States government. Any comparable instrument, laboratory supply, or reagent may be substituted in this protocol if operation and performance are deemed comparable to the items specified.