CENTRE FOR
INVASIVE SPECIES SOLUTIONS

RHDV SAMPLING KIT INSTRUCTIONS

Notes for collecting samples for RHDV analysis

Thank you for collecting a sample for RHDV analysis. Below is some basic information for you in regards to collecting a sample and posting it back to us for analysis.

Wild and feral animals may carry diseases that can infect people. Please ensure you take appropriate safety precautions when sampling rabbits (see safety guidelines on the following page)

The tube for your sample to go in contains a preserving liquid known as RNA Later. RNALater preserves genetic material at room temperature, eliminating the need for freezing or refrigeration.

Please make sure you only put one sample in each container.

You only need to collect EITHER liver OR leg bone, not both.

If you are collecting samples from more than one rabbit and have received multiple containers, please check the label on the container to ensure the correct rabbit sample goes in the correct container.

If you have any questions or are unsure about these procedures, please email us at RHDboost@invasiveanimals.com

Thank you for participating in the monitoring of rabbit biocontrol agents and rabbit viruses. The RHD Boost team.

Safety guidelines for collection of samples

Wild and feral animals may carry diseases that can infect people. Please ensure you are familiar with the NSW DPI, NSW Health and AVA guidelines available, and precautions for personal health and hygiene and to reduce exposure when sampling rabbits.

Guidelines and information to protect yourself against zoonosis is available from:

NSW DPI	Biosecurity, wildlife and feral animals
	Zoonoses - animal diseases that may affect humans
NSW Health	NSW Health Factsheets
AVA	Guidelines for veterinary personal biosecurity

Personal health and hygiene

- Cover cuts and abrasions with a waterproof dressing;
- Wear gloves (provided in your kits);
- Wash and dry hands after handling all samples;
- Do not eat or smoke while handling samples, and ensure that you wash and dry hands before smoking or eating;
- Shower and wash clothing after sampling;
- Your kits include a set of latex gloves. Latex can cause skin irritation and allergic reactions such as anaphylaxis, in which case urgent medial aid should be sought.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you become ill and a zoonosis is suspected.

Handling samples and disposal

- Only people familiar with animal handling and sampling techniques, the risks involved and appropriate safety measures should handle dead rabbits and collect samples for RHDV analysis.
- Please take particular care when using scissors, knives or other sharp objects. Ensure the equipment is in good working order and always cut away from yourself.
- Place the spaceman in a disposable bag, which is then sealed in a disposable airtight container or bag, such as a ziploc freezer bag, and stored in the freezer.
- Wash all equipment and surfaces with bleach or hospital grade disinfectant after use.
- Place all disposable containers, bags, waste and the remainder of the dead rabbit in a bag or container clearly labeled 'biological waste', and place in an external bin.

Handling RNAlater

RNA Later is a non-hazardous substance, however:

- Always wear gloves
- Do not inhale
- In case of skin contact – wash off immediately with soap and plenty of water
- In case of eye contact – remove contact lenses (if any), rinse thoroughly with plenty of water for at least 15 minutes and consult a physician
- If swallowed rinse mouth with water and obtain immediate medical attention
- Always wash hands immediately after handing RNAlater.

Reporting unusual signs of disease or death in wildlife

To report unusual signs of disease or death in wildlife:

- Contact your state Wildlife Health Coordinator, or
- Ring the emergency animal disease hotline on 1800 675 888.

For advice on human health

- If you have any concerns regarding your health or the health of other people in-contact with the suspect animal contact NSW Health and tell them that you have had contact with a sick animal. http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/Infectious/factsheets

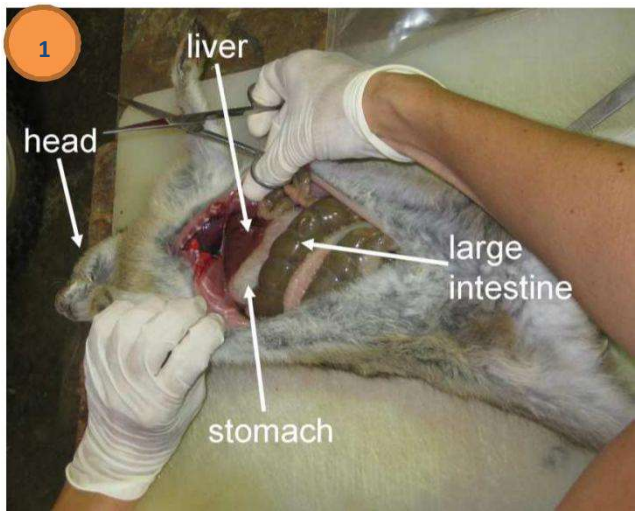
How to collect a sample for RHDV analysis

This page contains information on how to collect liver OR bone samples from dead rabbits for further analysis. Please note: You only need to provide a liver OR bone sample per vial, not both.

Please clean your scissors/knife and bench with bleach or warm soapy water between each rabbit.
Please ensure you have defrosted the rabbit. This will make sample collection easier.

Option 1. Sampling liver.

Step 1. Carefully cut open up your rabbit carcass and locate the liver. The liver is dark red in colour and located above the stomach.



Step 2. Cut off a small piece of the liver (approx. 2cm x 2cm).

Step 3. Insert the liver sample into the sample container. Be careful not to displace the preserving liquid, and ensure the entire sample is submerged in the liquid.

Step 4. Screw the cap onto the container, ensuring the cap is on properly and tight to prevent any leakage, and place it between the absorbent layers and seal the zip lock bag. Place the bag inside the reply paid envelope and post back to us.

Option 2. Sampling leg bone.

Step 1. Select one hind leg of the rabbit, and separate it from the carcass. Remove the fur and flesh, then remove the head of the bone by applying pressure and snapping the bone. This is so it fits within the container.

Step 2. Please remove any flesh still on the bone, and insert the bone into the container, broken end first. Be careful not to displace the preserving liquid.

Step 3. Please ensure the entire leg bone is fully submerged in the preserving liquid.

Step 4. Screw the cap onto the container ensuring the cap is on properly and tight to prevent any leakage and place it between the absorbent layers and seal the zip lock bag. Place the bag inside the reply paid envelope and post back to us.

If you have any questions about this procedure, please contact the RHD Boost Team – Email RHDboost@invasiveanimals.com