

6 Tips to Ensure Speedy Sample Results

Author: [Laura Kieser](#), Account Manager



DAIRYLAND
Laboratories, Inc.

When clients send in samples for analysis, we know they would like those results as soon as possible. Most of the time, various decisions and someone's business is impacted by those results. While trying to get those results back to you in a timely manner, our team of lab technicians are continually striving to provide the most accurate results. They deal with hundreds of individual samples every day, each with their own unique set of analysis requests. Depending on the request, the information is often collated and combined from different locations, utilizing refined resources from across the Dairyland network. Ever wonder what you can do to make sure you get your feed/forage test results back as soon as possible with accurate information? Here are a few tips to help.

1. **Label your sample completely** – The more information you can provide, the less time the lab technicians spend digging up and guessing your name, account number, farm name, sample types, etc. When complete information is provided, they can catalog your sample appropriately and efficiently, resulting in more time to do the work to process and analyze your sample. Another option for including complete information and eliminating errors is to submit your sample information using the Sample Management Center, then include the E-number with your sample. Using this method, all your sample details are automatically uploaded to the lab. No need to decipher handwriting!
2. **Choose the appropriate test package or method of analysis for your sample** – Some sample types have particular methods that need to be followed for analysis. If you call the lab inquiring about unexpected results or a delay of your results, this may be one of the first line items they ask you about, cross referencing what was marked on the submission form submitted with the sample.
3. **Provide an appropriately sized and representative sample of your material** – sampling technique and sample size is the most common place for unexpected sample results. Take the time to get a representative sample of your material whether it is forage, grain, etc. Submitting a 2-gallon bag of corn grain to the lab, doesn't mean it's better. It means the lab techs must spend time dividing the sample appropriately and that takes time away from being able to do the analysis. Quality of sample will win over quantity of sample, every time. In the case of hay samples, a smaller sample of chopped hay is preferred over an entire bale of hay. Utilizing a hay probe on multiple bales, combining that in a sample bag is an optimum approach. Our Dairyland Labs sample bags are conveniently marked to assist you in submitting the appropriately sized sample.
4. **Ask questions about timing on sample types you may not use regularly** – you may submit basic NIR requests on a regular basis and know the expected turnaround time and cost. If you add an additional test, do you assume that you will get the results in the same amount of time? Sometimes the answer is yes, sometimes no. Our lab technicians are happy to talk with you about the expected timeline on all our testing options.
5. **Get to know your postage and shipment options** - Postage handling times will vary by carrier in many areas. Certain sample types, like water for example, need to arrive at the lab within a certain window of time from when the original sample was taken. Get to know your local post office, FedEx team, Speed-Dee Delivery, etc. and visit with them about pick-up and delivery times. The timing of mailing will impact the date the sample arrives at the lab.
6. **Utilize technology to receive your reports on the web** – If you utilize our customer portal with web reporting, you will receive your sample results electronically as well as have a library of all your results. This is especially handy if you are comparing how a silage is changing over the season, or from year to year.

By implementing a few of these tips, you can assist us in getting your sample results back to you in a timely manner, with accurate results. As always, Dairyland is here to answer any questions and help you meet your goals. Call us to talk over your needs.

Serving the testing needs of agriculture since 1958

Comprehensive analyses of feed, forage, soil, water, molds and mycotoxins

Arcadia, WI • Stratford, WI • De Pere, WI
St. Cloud, MN • Battle Creek, MI • Jerome, ID

217 E. Main • Arcadia, WI 54612
P (608) 323-2123 • F (608) 323-2184

www.dairylandlabs.com