

**United States Department of Agriculture  
Agricultural Marketing Service, Science & Technology  
Pesticide Data Program**

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Title: Sampling Procedures for PDP		
Revision: 3	Replaces: 06/05/2024	Effective: 09/18/2024

**1. Purpose:**

To provide standardized procedures for all States participating in the USDA/AMS Pesticide Data Program (PDP) for the following:

- development of quarterly sampling plans and sampling documentation.
- sampling procedures.
- packing and shipping procedures.
- implementation of Sample Information Forms (SIFs) and Chain of Custody.

**2. Scope:**

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) shall be followed by all State personnel involved in the management and collection of samples for PDP.

**3. Outline of Procedure:**

**5. SAMPLING PLANS AND DOCUMENTATION**

5.1 Master Site List

5.2 Relative Volume Information for Sampling Sites

5.3 Quarterly Selection of Sampling Sites

5.4 Quarterly Sampling Schedules, Fact Sheets, Laboratory Mailing Addresses, and Shipping Assignment Charts

5.5 Assignment of Sample Collectors

**6. SAMPLING PROCEDURES**

6.1 Primary, Alternate, and Proxy Site Sampling

6.2 Sample Size

6.3 Sample Collection

6.4 Collection of Specific Commodities

6.5 Purchasing Samples

**7. PACKING AND SHIPMENT OF SAMPLES**

7.1 Packing Procedures for All Commodities

7.2 Packing Fresh and Delicate Commodities

7.3 Packing Processed Commodities

7.4 Shipment of PDP Samples

7.5 Shipping Fresh and Delicate Commodities

7.6 Shipping Processed Commodities

**8. SAMPLE INFORMATION FORMS AND CHAIN OF CUSTODY**

8.1 PDP General Requirements

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8.2 Electronic Sample Information Forms (eSIFs)

8.3 Paper Sample Information Forms

8.4 Chain of Custody

## 9. TRAINING AND EVALUATION OF SAMPLE COLLECTORS

9.1 Training for Sample Collectors

9.2 Evaluation of Sample Collectors

## 10. Special Sampling Scenarios

10.1 Makeup and Resample

10.2 Double or Triple Sampling

## 4. **References:**

- Duan, F., Gregg, M., Jacob, T., Keller, T., and Quan, P. 2016. Estimating the Precision of Quantile Estimates of Pesticide Residues. U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Methods Division, internal publication.
- PDP/MDP Federal/State Meeting, Denver, CO, September 27-29, 2005
- PDP Federal/State Meeting, Fairfax, Virginia, October 26-28, 2004
- Sampling Managers' Meeting, Manassas, Virginia, June 18-19, 2002
- Federal-State Meeting, Seattle, Washington, October 30-November 1, 2002
- Memo; PDP Sampling and RDE Issues, November 16, 1999
- Federal-State Meeting, Alexandria, Virginia, October 26-28, 1999
- PDP/MDP Technical Meeting, Richmond, Virginia, March 27-31, 2006
- USDA Tropical Products Transport Handbook, September 1989
- USDA Agricultural Export Transportation Handbook, February 2004
- USDA, AMS, Protecting Perishable Foods During Transport by Truck September 1995; Reprinted July 2008.
- [FedEx Guide to Proper Packaging](#)
- [FedEx Guide on Packaging Perishable Shipments](#)
- User Guide for Pesticide Data Program (PDP) Remote Data Entry (RDE) Electronic Sample Information Form (eSIF) Application, Version 2024.08.22
- SAMP APPE-1: A blank Sample Information Form (Revision 7, version issued March 20, 2024) with accompanying instructions

## 5. **Sampling Plans and Documentation:**

### 5.1 Master Site List

5.1.1 Each State participating in PDP sample collection shall be responsible for

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documenting a master site list that includes all PDP sampling sites.

**5.1.2** Sampling sites for PDP samples will be close to the point of consumption to reflect consumer exposure to pesticide residues from foods. The current sampling frame consists of wholesale food locations such as distribution centers and terminal markets. **Retail sites should not be included on the master site list.** Some sites may have non-standard distribution models (i.e., combination of direct distribution and retail). Consult the PDP Sampling Team for acceptability.

**5.1.3** The master site list shall include the following information for each sampling site:

- Site code
- Region or other geographical division (if applicable)
- Facility name and mailing address
- Date of inclusion or date of deletion from the site list, when known, clearly marked as such. Refer to Section [5.1.10](#) and [5.1.11](#) for requirements on the recording of new and inactive sites.
- Type of facility (e.g., terminal market, chain store distribution center, wholesale market, etc.)
- Type(s) of commodities available at the sampling site (e.g., fresh/canned/frozen fruit and vegetables, etc.). This information will be used by MPD to code the sites in the PDP database.
- Relative volume information (Refer to Section [5.2](#) for method of calculation)

**5.1.4** For all types of sampling facilities, States shall assign each site a unique numerical reference code per MPD instructions. At terminal market locations, each vendor will be assigned a unique site code. This site code will be included as part of the sample's permanent identification number.

**5.1.5** If site codes are assigned based on a particular organizational structure, rather than random numerical or alphabetical order, this numbering system shall be easily identifiable on the site list. For example, a State may divide its sites into geographical regions and assign the site codes accordingly (i.e., 100's for Region 1, 200's for Region 2, etc.).

**5.1.6** Small, remote sampling sites that are too expensive or difficult to access to collect a sample should not be included on the State's master site list. State internal SOPs shall explain the basic criteria used to determine which sampling sites to allow or exclude from the master site list.

**5.1.7** Site codes shall be assigned only once. If the physical location and facility remains the same (only the name changes), the site may retain the original site number. The old and new name should be shown on the master site list for referencing samples collected prior to

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the name change.

**5.1.8** If the site name remains the same, but the physical location of the facility is moved to a new address, a decision on the assignment of the original or a new site code will be made by the PDP Sampling Team in consultation with National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) on a case-by-case basis.

**5.1.9** If a site has been deleted from active sampling and is later reinstated, it must retain the same site number as before.

**5.1.10** When locations are added to a master site list, each new location's corresponding relative volume information shall also be provided. The revised master site list and relative volume information shall be provided to NASS.

**5.1.11** Inactive sites must remain on the master list but shall be denoted as no longer included in active sampling. Inactive sites may become "active" again later if appropriate. The site code and all other information pertaining to an inactive site shall remain on the master site list for future reference.

**5.1.12** Changes to the master site list shall be made as they occur. Information on site changes shall be provided to the PDP Sampling Team, PDP Database Administrator, and the NASS statistician. NASS must be aware that sites have been made inactive so that they are removed from the quarterly selection process. When new sites are added or previous sites are reinstated as active, the PDP Sampling Team, PDP Database Administrator, and the NASS statistician shall be notified as soon as possible because these sites should be included in the routine site selection process. If a State selects sites for sampling from its own Master Site List, notification of changes need only be reported to MPD as they occur.

**5.1.13** MPD shall be responsible for updating the PDP database to reflect sampling site changes as they occur. MPD will place an updated site look-up table on the Azure cloud drive for import by sample collectors into their Remote Data Entry (RDE) electronic sample information form (eSIF) application when new sites are added. Quarterly, MPD will send the laboratories an updated site look-up table holding all States/Sites for import into their local lab RDE tool.

**5.1.14** Yearly, MPD shall provide State Sampling Managers with a copy of their State's master site list from the PDP central database, which will include the codes for the sampling sites, type of commodities sampled at each site (i.e., canned/frozen/fresh commodities), and relative size measures for each site (refer to Section [5.2](#)). State Sampling Managers will be responsible for comparing the database site list with their records to detect any discrepancies and send revisions to the PDP Sampling Team. MPD will make corrections, as needed, to

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update the information in the PDP database and distribute site look-up table updates for the RDE software.

## **5.2 Relative Volume Information for Sampling Sites**

**5.2.1** Each State shall provide comparative volume information (quantity of the produce distributed compared to other sites) for each of the sampling sites on its master site list. The State will determine the “size measure” (comparative volume number) for the random selection of sampling sites. *Size measures must be reviewed and updated as changes occur.* If the State Sampling Manager encounters any problems in obtaining this volume information, they should inform the PDP Sampling Team and the NASS statistician.

**5.2.2** Internal SOPs for each State shall explain how the size measures are determined.

**5.2.3** The size measures shall be the basis of random site selection. For example, on a scale of 1 to 10, a site distributing 100,000 pounds of produce may be given a size measure of 10, whereas a site distributing 10,000 pounds of produce may be given a size measure of 1. The site with a site measure of “10” will then be ten times more likely to be selected during any one month than the site with a measure of “1.”

**5.2.4** States should try to further break down the volume information for a site into commodity groups (e.g., fresh produce, canned produce, and frozen produce). It is permissible, however, to have a single size measure for all available commodities or commodity groups. The NASS statistician can assist the States in making these determinations.

**5.2.5** Sample collectors should also have this information with them in the field to aid them in making alternate site selections that are closely equivalent in size to the primary site.

## **5.3 Quarterly Selection of Sampling Sites**

**5.3.1** Each participating State shall be assigned a set number of samples to collect per commodity each month. The assigned number of samples per month is based on State population. This number shall remain constant from month-to-month throughout the calendar year, unless otherwise indicated.

**5.3.2** NASS selects sites for quarterly sampling from a State’s master site list using probability proportional to size (PPS) and simple random sampling methods. These statistically sound selection methods are an important factor in the national representativeness of PDP sampling. State Sampling Managers should adhere to the sampling sites selected by NASS, and only switch sites out in rare circumstances.

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**5.3.3** Each participating State has the option of seeking advice and/or assistance from the NASS statistician regarding the quarterly site selection process. If a State chooses to perform its own quarterly site selection, the NASS statistician should be provided with all relevant information regarding the site selection process for approval. NASS should review all selection procedures and the review should be documented by MPD and NASS. After the procedures have been approved by NASS, the State Sampling Manager shall send an email to MPD and NASS yearly indicating that the site selection procedures have not changed. NASS should re-review procedures every five years or when changes to the selection procedure are made.

**5.3.4** Sites shall be chosen for the entire quarter. Site selection criteria must be approved by NASS and requested by the State Sampling Manager 30 days prior to the start of the new quarter. The Sampling Manager may separate the selected sites into three distinct subsets of equal size at the convenience of the State (e.g., based on geographical location). The three groups may then be randomly assigned in a one-to-one manner to each of the three months in the quarter. Alternatively, the NASS statistician will randomly assign selected sites to months.

**5.3.5** No site, regardless of its size measure, shall have more than two samples of each commodity collected from the same site in a given month. Exceptions will be approved by MPD and the State Sampling Manager.

**5.3.6** Every reasonable effort should be made to ensure the assigned number of samples are collected. Good communication between the sample collectors and their Sampling Managers, as well as between the State Sampling Managers and the laboratories is essential for detecting and correcting problems with missing, unavailable, or damaged samples. State Sampling Managers are encouraged to request assistance from MPD, if needed, to facilitate this process.

**5.4 Quarterly Sampling Schedules, Fact Sheets, Laboratory Mailing Addresses, and Shipping Assignment Charts**

**5.4.1** Forty-five (45) days prior to the beginning of each new quarter, the PDP Sampling Team will provide State Sampling Managers and Laboratory Directors with a draft of the proposed PDP Quarterly Sampling Schedule, Shipping Assignment Chart, new Commodity Fact Sheets (when applicable), and laboratory mailing addresses for commodities to be collected in the new quarter. These schedules are initial suggestions only: State Sampling Managers and Laboratory Directors should review the documents *through communication with each other* and offer their preferred schedule to the PDP Sampling Team within 10 days of receipt of the documents.

**5.4.2** Thirty (30) days prior to the beginning of each new quarter, the final PDP Quarterly

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Sampling Schedule, Shipping Assignment Chart, and new Fact Sheets will be distributed. The PDP Sampling Team shall ensure that MPD sampling documents are updated on the PDP SharePoint site as changes occur.

**5.4.3** The Shipping Assignment Chart is updated quarterly to reflect program changes and is provided to the State Sampling Manager for distribution to the sample collectors.

**5.4.4** State Sampling Managers shall review the laboratory mailing addresses distributed with the quarterly sampling information to ensure shipping information (i.e., contact person and address, including Building/Room number) is current for each State in their shipping provider account.

**5.4.5** State Sampling Managers shall upload final copies of their monthly schedules to the PDP SharePoint site prior to the beginning of each new quarter by the following date: Quarter 1, December 15; Quarter 2, March 15; Quarter 3, June 15; Quarter 4, September 15. Contact the PDP Sampling Team if you have trouble uploading your schedule.

**5.4.6** The State Sampling Schedule shall be divided into the three months of the quarter.

**5.4.7** Each month's schedule shall include at least the following information:

- Sampling dates and commodity(ies) to be sampled
- Primary site numbers for each commodity

**5.4.8** State Sampling Managers and laboratories shall coordinate sampling dates by the first day of the month prior to the start of the new quarter. This collaboration will allow the States time to finalize their sampling schedules.

**5.4.9** State Sampling Schedules should never include any sites known to be inactive or that have declined participation in the program.

**5.4.10** If necessary, the PDP Sampling Team will assist in the coordination between the State Sampling Managers and laboratories to agree on the selection of specific sampling weeks for the collection of the assigned number of samples per commodity. If necessary, the same commodity may be collected over a 2-day period; however, the receiving laboratory shall first be notified and must agree to the 2-day collection timeframe. When coordinating sampling weeks, each participant must also be made aware of any Federal and State holidays or other days when samples cannot be received at the laboratory.

**5.4.11** States may group different commodities for collection on the same day at the same site.

**5.4.12** Days of the week selected for sample collection may vary from State to State but

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shall be within the first three working days of the specified collection week. Monday and Tuesday are the preferred days for PDP sample collection. Exceptions to this schedule must first be approved by the receiving laboratory or may occur when one of the first three days of the specified collection week is a Federal or State holiday.

**5.4.13** Friday sampling is not permitted for fresh or frozen commodities.

**5.4.14** Samples shall not be shipped out the day before a Federal or State holiday. Sampling States that have the option to hand deliver samples directly to the laboratory may arrive the day before a holiday if prior arrangements have been made with the receiving laboratory.

**5.4.15** Additional information regarding sample collection, packaging, and shipping will be provided by the PDP Sampling Team 30 days prior to the beginning of the next quarter.

**5.4.16** States performing PDP sample collection may be required to ship special collection samples to one or more State or Federal laboratories for analysis. Specific information regarding such assignments is provided in the PDP Sample Shipping Assignment Charts.

## **5.5 Assignment of Sample Collectors**

**5.5.1** Each State shall designate individuals to serve as their sample collectors.

**5.5.2** Each participating State shall maintain a list of personnel involved in the collection of PDP samples. This list shall include the following:

- Name
- Assignment of sampling sites, cities, and geographical regions (if applicable)
- Whether the employee works on PDP full-time or part-time
- The estimated number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) used to fulfill the requirements of PDP sampling. This number shall include ALL aspects of sampling (e.g., sample collection, management of the program, tracking samples, clerical duties, etc.)

**5.5.3** The PDP Sampling Team shall be notified of changes to sample collector information as changes occur.

**5.5.4** MPD shall be responsible for updating the PDP database to reflect sample collector changes as they occur. MPD will place an updated collector look-up table on the Azure cloud drive for import by sample collectors into their RDE eSIF application when collectors are added or de-activated. Quarterly, MPD will send the laboratories an updated collector look-up table holding all States/Collectors for import into their local lab RDE tool.



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**5.5.5** MPD shall add or de-activate user accounts for sample collectors in the USDA User Management System (UMS) to grant or block access to the Azure cloud drive used by the RDE eSIF application for data transfers.

**5.5.6** State Sampling Managers or designee shall designate the number of commodity samples, with corresponding dates and sites, to be collected by each sample collector per month.

**5.5.7** If a sample(s) will not be collected due to personal emergency, plant closure, weather conditions, etc., the sample collector shall notify the State Sampling Manager for reassignment to a different collector, alternate site, or sampling date.

**5.5.8** If a sample collector cannot sample a product on the scheduled day, they shall immediately notify the State Sampling Manager. The State Sampling Manager (or designee) shall in turn notify MPD and contact the receiving laboratory to arrange for a resampling date.

**5.5.9** Makeup samples shall be collected as soon as feasible and within the same month. It is permissible to collect a sample in a month following the scheduled sample collection date **only** under one of the following circumstances: (1) carrier delays result in the sample not arriving in acceptable condition on their scheduled date near the end of a month and it is not possible to resample before the month's end, (2) the sample has arrived at the laboratory in unacceptable condition and it is not possible to resample before the month's end, (3) general unavailability of commodity, or (4) special circumstances arise where consultation is made between the collection State and MPD and it is determined that resampling a following month is deemed necessary. In any of these instances, MPD *and* the receiving laboratory must be notified for approval to "make up" the lost sample on a specified day the following month.

**5.5.10** Frequent make-ups are strongly discouraged. Over time, these actions may introduce undesirable bias in the PDP results. Make-up sampling shall not occur after the end of a calendar year (December 31) because the results would represent sampling efforts from two different years.

**6. Sampling Procedures:**

**6.1 Primary, Alternate, and Proxy Site Sampling**

**6.1.1** Sample collectors are responsible for carrying with them the current version of necessary reference documents when sampling:

- State and PDP SOPs
- Quarterly Sampling Schedules and Shipping Charts

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- Master Site List
- Commodity Fact Sheets
- Paper SIFs
- Office, Lab, and PDP Contact Information and Mailing Address

**6.1.2** Sample collectors should make every effort to collect samples at the scheduled primary site. A primary site is the scheduled, preferred site from the State's master site list of active sites where the sample should be collected. If it is determined that the commodity will not be available at the primary site, sample collectors should then choose an alternate site. If the commodity is not available at the primary or alternate site, a proxy (retail) site may be selected.

**6.1.3** Alternate sites are preferred to proxy sites. An alternate site is a back-up site from the State's master site list of active sites where the sample should be collected if it is not available at the primary site. The alternate site should be similar in size to the primary site (i.e., have a similar relative volume), if feasible. If the first alternate site does not have the commodity(ies), the sample collector can procure samples from another site of similar size as long as the site has not been sampled for the same commodity during the sample selection period (usually a month, but this can be a fraction of a month when the product is scheduled for double or triple sampling).

**6.1.4** The selection of an alternate site number or vendor shall be totally objective in nature, with no pre-determination made regarding the date of last sampling, variety of commodity available, etc.

**6.1.5** If the sample is collected at an alternate site, it is the sample collector's responsibility to include the primary (scheduled) site code on the sample identification label that is affixed to each sample. See Module 4\_Sample Collection\_Prep in the PDP Sampling Training Program for more information on sample IDs.

**6.1.6** A proxy site is a retail store that may be in close proximity to the primary or alternate site and preferably receives the product directly from the primary or alternate site (in the distribution chain). Proxy sites are only to be used if the commodity is not available at the primary or alternate site. Proxy sites should be coordinated and approved by the State Sampling Manager. It is preferable, but not required, that proxy sites be supplied by the primary site.

**6.1.7** Samples collected from proxy sites must be in their original carton/container and collected from the retail store's storage room, if possible. Only sealed, pre-packaged commodities may be collected from the retail store's shelf *provided all necessary sample information is available and can be verified*. If a sample is collected from the retail shelf, the

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sample must be sealed in a way to prevent cross-contamination and tampering (i.e., mesh bags and zippered bags are not considered sealed for this purpose). Products that are not completely sealed and pre-packaged (e.g., fresh fruits and vegetables) should not be sampled from the front of the store at proxy locations as they have a higher potential for cross contamination and full product information may not be available (grower, packer, etc.).

**6.1.8** If a proxy site is used for the collection of samples, the sample collector must note the following information on the eSIF: (1) the primary site code number and the correct Source ID code shall be recorded on the eSIF and on the sample identification label of the sample. Use Source ID code “P” for a single sample collected at a proxy site or “U-Z” for multiple samples of the same commodity collected at a proxy site (**where the same site code number is entered for multiple samples of the same commodity**); and (2) the name and address or name and store number of the proxy site shall be entered in the facility name field. *Note: When a proxy site is used, there is no need to include the alternate site on the eSIF – only the originally assigned primary site and proper proxy site designation is required. See the Sample ID – Situations and Resolutions document in the Appendix of the PDP Sampling Training Program for more information on sample IDs.*

**6.1.9** When more than one commodity is scheduled for sampling at the same site on the same date, all may be sampled from the primary or an alternate site/vendor, based on availability. All do NOT have to be sampled at the same site.

## **6.2 Sample Size**

**6.2.1** MPD provides Fact Sheets that include collection information for each commodity. Fact Sheets contain statements regarding the size, variety, list of acceptable and unacceptable products for collection, details on specially requested eSIF information, and special packing/shipping instructions. Fact Sheets are not comprehensive but serve as a reference to be used in conjunction with PDP SOPs. Additional information regarding the sampling of specific commodities will be provided, as necessary, in writing to State Sampling Managers by the PDP Sampling Team.

**6.2.2** A sample is a group of produce/food items randomly collected by trained sample collectors from a box/crate at a specific collection site that has a unique site code and/or grower/packer/distributor/variety/lot number assigned to it.

**6.2.3** Designated samples shall represent a given number of units, volume, or weight of a specific commodity collected at an assigned site on an assigned date. Each commodity sample is unique in that its label and associated eSIF contain information indicating it is different from other samples of the same commodity in at least one of the following areas: collection State; collection date; collection site; lot number; variety; or origin of grower, packer, or

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distributor.

**6.2.4** The weight and number of units per sample, as designated by MPD, shall be collected for each commodity. Information regarding the amount of each sample collected will be provided in the Fact Sheet and Shipping Assignment Chart by the PDP Sampling Team prior to the beginning of each new quarter. Refer to Section [5.4](#) for more on quarterly sampling documents.

**6.2.5** Sample collectors should collect samples that are as close to the target weight as possible. The use of a scale is strongly encouraged.

**6.2.6** Acceptable collection weights shall be within  $\pm 20\%$  of the required sample size specified on the commodity Fact Sheet. Samples that weigh less or are smaller in size than the lowest end of these ranges are not acceptable; in these cases, the sample collector may be asked to re-sample.

**6.2.7** Avoid collecting samples that are more than 20% over the target weight. Depending on the commodity, preparing the sampled portion can be very time consuming for lab staff.

**6.2.8** For dry goods, grain products, and selected fresh produce as authorized by MPD, if the size or weight of the available sample is at least twice the required amount designated by the PDP Shipping Assignment Chart or Fact Sheet, the sample collector may open the container or package and remove the required amount (i.e., subsample). Subsampling is a method that reduces sample size by selecting a subset of the original sample (i.e., a sample of a sample). The following criteria must be adhered to when subsampling:

- Once containers are opened, the sample collector shall take necessary precautions not to contaminate the sample.
- The sample collector shall ensure a representative sample is obtained by collecting from multiple spots throughout the length, width, and depth of the container.
- Each participating State that performs subsampling shall have written procedures that include specific details on how to subsample from large containers as part of their internal sampling SOPs.

**6.2.9** In special cases, States may be required to collect larger amounts per sample for Quality Assurance programs, or to split samples within the collection State. Sample collectors shall receive specific instructions from the State Sampling Manager regarding these exceptions.

**6.2.10** If a sample will be analyzed by more than one laboratory location, it may be

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necessary for the sample collector to pick-up a duplicate sample for shipment to each appropriate laboratory. When applicable, instructions on sample duplication and shipping destination will be made in the PDP Shipping Assignment Chart.

### **6.3 Sample Collection**

**6.3.1** States should call the scheduled sampling site up to one business day in advance of the assigned sampling date to inquire about the availability of the commodity(ies) to be sampled. If a sample collector calls ahead to have the product available upon arrival, the sample collector shall request that such product be stored in a refrigerated area until pick up.

**6.3.2** If feasible based on site logistics, the sample collector should request that personnel at the collection sites randomly select a sample carton/container and have it available for the sampler to pick up at the site, only if a sample collector is not provided access to the collection facility. This collection method shall be an exception and shall be used only when necessary. Personnel at collection sites may not select the sample from a box/crate.

**6.3.3** When selecting a pallet/group to be sampled at a vendor site, the sample collector shall use an appropriate means of random selection that is outlined in the State's internal Sampling SOPs. These SOPs shall be kept on file by the State Sampling Manager. The random selection process used by the sample collectors must be acceptable to both the NASS statistician and the State Sampling Manager.

**6.3.4** Once a pallet/group has been randomly chosen, it is permissible to collect the entire sample from one box/crate. This is the preferred method. Samples may be selected from a variety of boxes/crates, provided that all boxes/crates are from *the same lot number*. Time stamps may vary, but the entire lot number **must** be the same. Contact the PDP Sampling Team for questions about lot numbers ([pdp.sampling@usda.gov](mailto:pdp.sampling@usda.gov)).

**6.3.5** Sample collectors shall take note if any expiration dates are recorded on the commodity that is being sampled. Sample collectors shall not collect product beyond its expiration date.

**6.3.6** A "Best Used By" date is not the same as an expiration date and only describes possible quality changes over time. Sample collectors may collect samples after a "Best Used By" date if the integrity of the product has not been compromised.

**6.3.7** Samples should be collected and bagged in the warehouse facility to avoid exposure to inclement weather, high or sub-freezing temperatures, and external contamination.

**6.3.8** If only the exact sample amount(s) will be taken from the sampling site, the correct portion should be placed directly in the official sample container (bag) and sealed by the

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sample collector prior to exiting the facility. The entire case of product may, in agreement with the warehouse management, be taken to a more convenient location within the facility before removing the sample portion (e.g., area of the warehouse maintained at normal room temperature).

**6.3.9** If necessary, an entire case or carton of product may be taken to a more convenient location before removing the sample portion, provided that sufficient precautions are taken to ensure the sample remains in optimum condition and is not contaminated by external factors.

**6.3.10** Perishable products must be stored at refrigerated temperatures if the transfer/transit time exceeds 30 minutes before packaging for shipment is initiated.

**6.3.11** When collecting and packaging more than one sample, the sample collector shall prevent cross-contamination between samples. This process may be accomplished by utilizing disposable gloves, sterile hand wipes, or the washing of hands with soap and water between samples. If gloves are used (preferred method), they must be worn throughout the process of collecting the entire sample, properly discarded afterwards, and replaced by fresh gloves prior to collecting the next sample.

**6.3.12** All supplies used for the collection, storage, and transport of samples must be free of any contaminants that may affect the analytical results. The sample collector shall ensure adequate sanitation from sampling through packaging to avoid contamination of product.

**6.3.13** Samples shall be placed in a plastic bag. Paper bags may be used only for certain commodities with written permission from the PDP Sampling Team (paper bags may contain compounds that will affect analytical results).

**6.3.14** Loose samples or prepackaged containers (e.g., clamshells) shall be bagged using at least a two (2) millimeter thick plastic bag.

**6.3.15** The bag containing the sample shall be sealed in a manner that any attempt to tamper with the contents would easily be noticed. A detailed description of the tamper-proofing method used shall be included as part of the State's internal SOPs for sampling. These SOPs must be kept on file by the State Sampling Manager. If the sample is hand-delivered to the laboratory, tamper-proofing methods are optional, provided chain of custody is maintained.

**6.3.16** The tamper-proofing mechanism shall be initialed and dated by the sample collector who has bagged the sample. This information, coupled with a Quarterly Sampling Schedule that each laboratory maintains on file, will suffice to complete chain of custody requirements, and will allow initiation of sample processing and analysis in the event of a delayed eSIF.

**6.3.17** Each sample bag shall be labeled with information that uniquely identifies the

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sample (i.e., the sample ID). The sample identification number is an 18-digit number that uniquely identifies each sample. The identification number must include: 2-letter State of collection, 6-digit date (yy/mm/dd), 4-digit site code number, 2-letter commodity code, 3-character receiving laboratory code, and 1-letter source ID code when required. An example sample identification number is: CO-240819-0046-AP-WA1 (Colorado collected on August 19, 2024, at site 0046 a sample of fresh apples that will be analyzed at the Yakima, Washington laboratory).

**6.3.18** A legible and permanently marked sample label shall be placed in a clear packing envelope affixed to the outside of each sample bag. Notations shall include: (1) unique sample identification information, (2) date, (3) sample collector name, and (4) alternate or proxy site information (if applicable). *Note: For chain of custody purposes, the sample collector name on the sample label must match the sample collector on the eSIF.*

**6.3.19** All information may be pre-entered on the label **except** for the site number, date, and whether an alternate and/or proxy site was sampled. *All information for a particular sample shall be unequivocally identified before leaving the site.*

**6.3.20** The use of whiteout is not permitted. Sample collectors should use a single line to cross-out the error and neatly write the correct information. It is best practice for samplers to initial and date the correction.

**6.3.21** Simple errors (e.g., transposing lot numbers, labeling, etc.) do not require the initiation of a corrective action unless specified in an internal SOP.

**6.3.22** If a deviation from the SOP is required, the change shall be approved in writing by the MPD Director.

## **6.4 Collection of Specific Commodities**

### **6.4.1 Fresh and Delicate Commodities**

**6.4.1.1** Fresh commodities refer to raw, whole produce (i.e., whole carrots, heads of lettuce, celery stalks, etc.). Not included are "prepared" produce, such as salad mixtures, sliced carrots or chopped celery, unless otherwise stated in writing by MPD. Items that are merely washed, brushed, or bagged are acceptable (i.e., leaf spinach, apples).

**6.4.1.2** Delicate commodities refer to fresh produce (e.g., strawberries, raspberries, peaches, etc.) that are highly susceptible to bruising, crushing and/or deterioration during the sampling, packaging, and shipping process or may deteriorate if exposed to excessive temperature or humidity.

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**6.4.1.3** Sample collectors shall be careful to select individual fruit or vegetables that are in good condition without any noticeable bruises, decay, or other visible defects.

**6.4.1.4** Sample collectors should select fresh commodities with uniform maturity or ripeness. Collection of under ripe or immature product is encouraged. Select fresh commodities that are not fully matured or ripened to ensure that the sample arrives to the laboratory in acceptable condition. For example, strawberries that contain a small amount of green outside flesh are acceptable. Some commodities may be difficult to determine maturity or ripeness, but collectors should use their best professional judgment when collecting samples.

**6.4.1.5** The sample should be culled to sort out overripe, bruised, decayed, or otherwise defective portions.

**6.4.1.6** Sample collectors should exercise extreme caution when handling delicate commodities to minimize bruising or crushing.

**6.4.1.7** If the sample collector transports fresh commodities from a location other than the collection site for packaging and shipping, necessary precautions should be taken to package the product in a container to minimize shifting of product during transit.

**6.4.1.8** When samples are collected during the warm season, delicate commodities should be packaged in a pre-cooled insulated container to minimize damage from heat and humidity during transit. Maintaining recommended transit temperature for delicate commodities is crucial in ensuring that the product arrives in acceptable condition.

**6.4.1.9** If a situation arises where the commodity cannot be packaged and shipped on the same day as sample collection, the commodity must be refrigerated. The State Sampling Manager, the receiving laboratory, and MPD shall be notified.

**6.4.2** Processed Commodities

**6.4.2.1** Processed commodity refers to any food product that has undergone physical or chemical treatment resulting in a substantial change in the original state of the food. Frozen, canned, and dried foods are examples of processed commodities.

**6.4.2.2** Sample collectors may not open frozen or canned products to obtain the appropriate size or weight unless previously approved in writing by MPD.

**6.4.2.3** Sample collectors shall be careful to select products that are free from any noticeable dents, leakage, or other noticeable exterior damage.



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**6.4.2.4** Processed commodities shall consist of only the commodity to be sampled. For example, creamed corn, vegetable mixes, Italian style tomatoes, juice blends or cocktail juices, etc. are not acceptable.

**6.4.2.5** In some instances, frozen, dried, or canned commodities may be substituted for fresh commodities. Any substitution information will be provided on commodity Fact Sheets or otherwise in writing by the PDP Sampling Team.

**6.4.2.6** Occasionally, the collection of concentrated commodities will be alternated with ready-to-serve products, or a frozen commodity will be alternated with a liquid form based on the ratio of U.S. consumption or national sales. Additional information regarding sampling criteria for concentrated commodities will be provided in writing to the State Sampling Managers by the PDP Sampling Team unless otherwise stated in the Shipping Assignment Chart and commodity Fact Sheet.

**6.4.2.7** Additional information regarding sampling criteria for processed products will be provided on the commodity Fact Sheets or otherwise in writing by the PDP Sampling Team.

## **6.5 Purchasing Samples**

**6.5.1** The sample collector shall make payment to the appropriate site/vendor(s) as necessary.

**6.5.2** Exact method of payment (e.g., cash or State voucher) is determined by the individual States.

**6.5.3** A receipt must be provided by the vendor. Original paper receipt or electronic copy of the receipt should be retained by the State for all sample payments for a two-year period. After two years, State Sampling Managers may transfer only electronic records of receipts to a Federal Records Center (FRC). Contact MPD with questions concerning the disposition or transfer of records or if a State wishes to transfer records within a timeframe shorter than two years.

**6.5.4** The sample collector may purchase either the required sample amount or the entire case of product as required by the vendor.

**6.5.5** If an entire case is purchased, records must be kept and retained for two years by the States as to the disposal (donated, left with vendor, discarded, etc.) of the unused product. Donation of excess product is encouraged, and donation records should be sent to MPD annually, as requested.

**6.5.6** Payment for samples should approximate the local retail price, but an additional

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amount may be added, as appropriate, for the vendor's administrative costs. Prices for PDP commodities may fluctuate. Contact the PDP Sampling Team with concerns regarding commodity prices.

**6.5.7** Specific procedures/requirements regarding the purchase of PDP samples shall be explained as part of the State's internal SOP for sampling.

**7. Packing and Shipment of Samples:**

**7.1 Packing Procedures for All Commodities**

**7.1.1** These packing procedures provide minimum PDP requirements and are presented as general guidelines. Each participating State shall, as part of their internal sampling SOPs, have on file written procedures that include specific details as to the materials and procedures used for packing the PDP samples. Both the PDP SOP and the State's internal SOPs will be used as the measure of compliance during MPD sampling reviews.

**7.1.2** Each sample shall be packed by the sample collector.

**7.1.3** Samples of commodities that require refrigerated temperatures to maintain their original integrity shall be placed in a pre-cooled, insulated shipping container.

**7.1.4** Use enough frozen cold packs to maintain the product cool during transit. Most products will not be shipped via temperature-controlled transportation. Cold packs should be insulated from the commodity by creating a barrier with a material that will prevent direct contact with the commodity, thereby preventing any “freezer burn.” Maintaining recommended transit temperature is crucial to ensure that the product arrives in an acceptable condition. **Loose wet ice is not an acceptable coolant material.**

**7.1.5** Sample collectors shall use shipping containers that are the correct size for the commodity being shipped.

**7.1.6** Samples shall be packed in an insulated container (e.g., Styrofoam lined or thermal liner) for shipping.

**7.1.7** Sample collectors may place a solid polyethylene (plastic) bag liner in the insulated container to ensure against inadvertent leakage. The liner should be closed and properly sealed.

**7.1.8** Commodities should be arranged compactly inside the insulated container allowing space for ice packs.

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**7.1.9** Sufficient room shall be provided inside the shipping box so that samples are not squeezed, broken, bent, or bruised and there is no danger of rupturing sealed bags.

**7.1.10** The sample collector shall use enough packing materials (i.e., recycled paper, white butcher paper, and/or bubble wrap) to prevent movement of the produce during transit. These packing materials also provide insulation against sub-freezing temperatures during air transport. **Newspaper, brown butcher/kraft paper, and shredded computer paper are not acceptable packaging materials.**

**7.1.11** If the shipping container will not change hands, thereby maintaining chain-of-custody, it is not necessary for the packing box to be sealed (i.e., the collector “hand” delivers the sample(s) to the laboratory). The sample collector must ensure that the container lid fits tightly and securely so that it does not open during transit.

## **7.2 Packing Fresh and Delicate Commodities**

**7.2.1** If commodities have been grouped for collection, it is permissible for more than one commodity type to be placed directly in the same shipping container. When packaging more than one fresh commodity type, sample collectors should package together fresh commodities that have similar temperature, moisture, packaging, and shipping requirements to minimize product degradation. It is recommended that only commodities with similar sizes, weights, cooling requirements, and ethylene sensitivities be placed together in the same container. Information regarding these requirements is provided on each commodity Fact Sheet.

**7.2.2** For light-weight commodities (e.g., blueberries, raspberries, etc.) there is no limit on the number of like samples that may be shipped together in one box/container, as long as there is no possibility of crushing or damaging the samples. For heavier commodities such as nectarines and peaches, no more than two (2) samples shall be shipped together in the same box/container.

## **7.3 Packing Processed Commodities**

**7.3.1** Processed products shall be packed in a manner to conserve space, maintain temperature, and to minimize movement of product to avoid the rupturing or crushing of containers while in transit.

**7.3.2** When sampling glass containers, such as baby foods, protect individual containers in bubble wrap to prevent them from breaking during transit.

**7.3.3** Frozen samples must be packaged using a method that will ensure that the samples arrive at their receiving laboratory cold-to-the-touch.

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#### **7.4 Shipment of PDP Samples**

**7.4.1** To help reduce sampling costs, the reuse of shipping containers and ice packs is encouraged. If a sampling State elects to have a shipping container and packaging materials returned, a return shipping label must be included inside the box. Return shipping should be accomplished by the most cost-effective means possible.

**7.4.2** The sample collector and/or State Sampling Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that samples are shipped to the correct laboratory(ies) as provided quarterly on PDP Sample Shipping Assignment Charts.

**7.4.3** Individual commodity Fact Sheets shall be referenced for shipping instructions. Special shipping requirements will be specified in the Packing and Shipping section of the individual commodity Fact Sheet.

**7.4.4** All samples must be shipped by a service that results in the sample arriving at the assigned laboratory no later than the day following sample collection. Note: Some commodities are permitted to be shipped using ground shipping. See commodity Fact Sheet for specific shipping instructions. State Sampling Managers are responsible for following-up to determine if the samples are arriving within the established timeframe, are in acceptable condition, and/or taking action (e.g., changing delivery services) as needed if they are not.

**7.4.5** Sample collectors should receive prior approval from the laboratory for any samples arriving on Friday or the day before a holiday. Laboratory staff may not be available on days immediately before or after a holiday.

**7.4.6** Copies of shipping transactions for all samples shall be kept on file by the State in case shipping problems arise.

#### **7.5 Shipping Fresh and Delicate Commodities**

**7.5.1** The sample collector should label the outside of the box with statements such as: 1) FRAGILE, 2) THIS END UP, 3) PERISHABLE PRODUCT, or 4) REFRIGERATE UPON RECEIPT.

**7.5.2** Fresh and/or perishable commodities may be shipped to arrive at their respective laboratories at the latest by 5:00 p.m. on the day following sample collection if refrigerated internal temperatures can be maintained throughout transit. Receiving laboratories must approve this shipping schedule; otherwise, a 10:00 a.m. receiving time on the day following sample collection shall be followed.

**7.5.3** If perishable samples are hand-delivered to a local State office, shipping facility, or

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State laboratory, sample collectors shall place the product in a pre-cooled insulated shipping container along with enough ice packs to ensure refrigerated temperatures during transport.

**7.5.4** Perishable commodities shall not be shipped on Friday or the day before a Federal or State holiday. Exact dates for observed Federal Holidays are included in the Quarterly Sampling Memo.

**7.5.5** For highly perishable commodities (i.e., fish), it is suggested that the product be frozen overnight before shipping.

## **7.6 Shipping Processed Commodities**

**7.6.1** Frozen samples shall be shipped frozen by the sample collector on the date of collection in a manner that ensures they arrive at least “cold-to-the-touch” at the receiving laboratory.

**7.6.2** Most processed samples will be shipped at ambient temperature and can be shipped by ground to save on shipping costs. See commodity Fact Sheet for specific shipping details.

## **8. Sample Information Forms and Chain of Custody:**

### **8.1 PDP General Requirements**

**8.1.1** Sample Information Forms (SIFs) allow MPD to track the number and type of samples collected, the number of missing samples, and the reason(s) why a sample was not collected/analyzed.

**8.1.2** Electronic SIF (eSIF) is considered the default sample data recording option and should be used when feasible. The term eSIF will be used throughout this document.

**8.1.3** The sample collector shall ensure that *one* eSIF is completed for each assigned sample.

**8.1.4** If a sample will not be collected, an eSIF **must** be completed for each sample not collected and submitted to MPD. If paper SIFs are used for notification of an uncollected sample, the paper SIF must be sent or emailed to the receiving laboratory who in turn notifies MPD.

**8.1.5** In addition to sample identification information, the eSIF shall include: (1) available information regarding Country of origin, grower, packer, distributor, and lot number, and (2) details pertaining to agricultural practices employed during or after production such as chemically treated with sanitizers. As this information can be time consuming to input, photos

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that document this information are acceptable. It is recommended that the sample collector enter a comment such as “see photo for post-harvest information” in the free-form comment field of the eSIF. If available, this type of information can be found on the commodity container (box/crate) and should be taken from the packaging closest to the sample that has the needed information (e.g., for citrus in a netted bag inside a wax box, the netted bag is closest to the sample). If photos are not used, this information can be entered in the free-form Comment field of the eSIF.

**8.1.6** Sample collectors should make every attempt to locate and record origin and grower/packer/distributor information.

**8.1.7** Product variety information must be included on the eSIF, when available.

**8.1.8** *It is important that sample collectors complete all necessary fields of the eSIF.* Free-form fields such as Variety, Brand Name, Expiration Date, Packer Name, Grower Name, Distributor Name, and Lot Number/Other ID, **must not be left blank**. If the requested information cannot be found on the commodity container/box/carton, the sample collector shall enter “NA” in the field provided.

**8.1.9** When proxy (retail) sites are used for sample collection, the sample collector shall include the appropriate Source ID in the Sample ID and the proxy site’s name (or store number), and address in the Facility Name field (refer to Section [6.1.8](#)).

**8.1.10** It is strongly recommended that when typical sample information is not available, the sample collector record any other available identification information that could be used to track the sample in the Comments field of the eSIF.

**8.1.11** Paper versions of the SIF are acceptable only in instances where problems occur with the use of the electronic version (power outages, computer shutdowns, etc.). When paper SIFs are used, copies must be emailed to the appropriate laboratory within a timeframe to coincide with sample arrival (refer to Section [8.2.7](#)). If computer problems prevent scanning and emailing the paper SIF, refer to instructions in Section [8.3.5](#).

**8.1.12** MPD occasionally requests that special information (specific ingredients, generic varieties, etc.) be recorded and collected for certain commodities. Sample collectors are required to include this information on their eSIFs. The Fact Sheets list these special requests and explain where the information should be recorded on the eSIF.

**8.1.13** If, due to illness, natural disaster, weather conditions, etc., a State is unable to collect the scheduled sample(s), a new collection date shall be rescheduled for a different week/day of that month with the approval of the receiving laboratory. When the items are collected on the

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rescheduled date, the new collection date shall be entered on the eSIF.

**8.1.14** If re-scheduling must occur during the following month, the new collection date shall be entered on the eSIF along with a brief explanation of the delay. Refer to Section [5.5.9](#) for exceptions.

**8.1.15** Once the sample collector has mailed/exported (transmitted) the eSIF, no changes shall be made to the document without approval from the State Sampling Manager.

**8.1.16** Sample tracking information is not required to be emailed when the eSIF is submitted for routine sample collection. If requested by the laboratory, sample tracking information should be provided by the State Sampling Manager to help locate missing/delayed samples.

## **8.2 Electronic Sample Information Forms (eSIFs)**

**8.2.1** Sample information is entered on **Windows**-based laptop/desktop/tablet computers, **Apple** (iOS) iPhones/iPads, or **Android** phones/tablets.

**8.2.2** A **Login.gov** account is required for each sample collector in order to transmit the SIF data to USDA and to download updates to the standardized code look-up tables (like commodities and sites).

**8.2.3** Training for all sample collectors on the use of the eSIF application is required.

**8.2.4** Sample information shall be entered into the eSIF application as specified in the RDE eSIF User Guide, which is available on the PDP SharePoint site in the PDP Sampling section.

**8.2.5** If sample information is pre-entered into the sample collector's eSIF device or the "Duplicate Sample" feature is utilized, all entered data should be reviewed **AFTER** sample collection is completed to ensure the information is correct for samples that were collected. Reviewing sample information is important to ensure that accurate comparisons can be made between the sample once it is received at the laboratory and its corresponding eSIF.

**8.2.6** The eSIF application allows for up to eight photos to be attached per sample. It is **strongly recommended** that at least one photo is included per sample. However, if a site does not allow photos and it is not possible to take the photos at a secondary location (i.e., sampling vehicle, laboratory, etc.) or technical difficulties prevent the transfer of files, photos are not strictly required. The content of the photos should verify eSIF information such as: variety, country of origin, lot number, claim (i.e., organic), harvest date, expiration date, brand name, packaging type, and grower/packer/distributor information. Photos of PDP sample labels,

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packed samples, shipping labels, etc. are not required.

**8.2.7** It is preferred that eSIF files should be exported (transmitted) on the same day as sample collection. However, eSIF files **must** be submitted no later than 12:00 p.m., Eastern Time, on the day following sample collection. If this deadline cannot be met, the sample collector must immediately contact their State Sampling Manager and MPD ([pdp.sampling@usda.gov](mailto:pdp.sampling@usda.gov)).

**8.2.8** If a correction is needed to a previously submitted eSIF, follow the “Modify Sample” procedures described in the RDE eSIF User Guide and re-export (transmit) the sample. Email MPD ([amsmpo.data@usda.gov](mailto:amsmpo.data@usda.gov)) with a brief description of the change made (e.g., added source code, corrected lot number, etc.).

**8.2.9** Transmitted eSIF records should be kept on the eSIF application software for a minimum of 90 days following collection. This will allow for the original eSIF to be referenced, if needed, prior to laboratory data transmission to MPD.

**8.2.10** New RDE program information shall be updated on State’s field devices (handheld or laptop computers, tablets, phones) when supplied by MPD.

### **8.3 Paper Sample Information Forms**

**8.3.1** It is acceptable for sample collectors to hand-write sample information on a paper SIF, if necessary, for later recording on the eSIF. If this practice is performed, the sample collector **must**: (1) record all necessary sample information on the paper SIF BEFORE leaving the site, (2) sign and date the paper SIF and, (3) keep all paper SIFs on file for a minimum of two years because they are considered “raw data.”

**8.3.2** After two years, State Sampling Managers may transfer electronic copies of the paper SIF forms to a FRC (refer to procedures and templates in SOP PDP-ADMIN). MPD should be contacted for any questions concerning the disposition or transfer of records or if a State wishes to transfer records within a timeframe shorter than two years.

**8.3.3** Sample collectors shall ensure that all applicable portions of the form are PRINTED neatly and legibly. Mistakes on the SIF shall be marked through with a single line and dated and initialed at the time of the correction.

**8.3.4** The paper SIF must be signed and dated by the sample collector at the time of collection. If someone else collects the sample in place of the originally assigned collector, that individual must sign the form. Forms should never be signed prior to sample collection.

**8.3.5** If computer/electronic problems occur that prohibit the use of eSIFs, paper SIFs for



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both collected and uncollected samples shall be placed in a separate re-sealable plastic bag in the same shipping container as the corresponding sample, with any other samples collected by the sample collector, and mailed to the designated laboratory(ies).

**8.3.6** Sample collectors shall refer to the PDP SIF instruction sheets for further explanation on filling out the form. Instructions may be found on the PDP SharePoint site in the PDP Sampling section.

#### **8.4 Chain of Custody**

**8.4.1** Chain of custody requirements ensure the chronological possession of samples as they pass from sample collector to the carrier to the laboratory.

**8.4.2** The sample collector shall ensure that all chain of custody requirements are fulfilled. See Section [6.3.16](#).

**8.4.3** When eSIFs are used, written documentation (a paper SIF inside the shipping container) is unnecessary if all sample collection information entered in the eSIF is received by the laboratory.

**8.4.4** Paper SIFs serve as written documentation of the sample collector's possession of the sample and shall include the commodity collected, the site code, the date the samples were collected, the signature of the individual collecting and packaging the samples, and the date of transfer to the carrier.

### **9. Training and Evaluation of Sample Collectors:**

#### **9.1 Training for Sample Collectors**

**9.1.1** PDP-based training and evaluations serve as tools from which to teach and judge the sample collector's level of knowledge and skills for PDP sampling operations.

**9.1.2** PDP has developed a standardized training program for use by the States. The program consists of a series of PowerPoint modules detailing each aspect of the sampling process, a video on packing delicate commodities, and an Appendix. The training program can be found under the PDP Sampling section of the PDP SharePoint site and on the USDA CloudVault site.

**9.1.3** Training shall be conducted at least once a year to ensure that sample collectors have an acceptable level and working knowledge of PDP SOPs, the PDP RDE eSIF application, and current program updates. Although it is preferable that collectors meet in person with their State Sampling Manager for their training needs, it is acceptable for Sampling Managers to

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deliver training via electronic means.

**9.1.4** Sample collectors shall be updated on PDP program changes at the time State Sampling Managers are notified of such changes by MPD.

**9.1.5** Sample collectors shall be provided with reference documents listed in Section [6.1.1](#).

**9.1.6** New sample collectors shall become familiar with PDP SOPs, view applicable training presentations, and spend ample time in the field collecting, packaging, and shipping PDP commodities with their respective State Sampling Manager, or designee, prior to initiating their own collections.

**9.1.7** Sample collectors shall be provided and become familiar with all collection, packaging, and shipping supplies that are approved for use by their State Sampling Manager, or designee.

**9.1.8** State Sampling Managers shall keep on file a record of the training each sample collector receives and shall have such records available for viewing by MPD when requested. (Refer to SOP PDP-ADMIN).

## **9.2 Evaluation of Sample Collectors**

**9.2.1** Sample collector evaluations shall be conducted once a year or more frequently as necessary.

**9.2.2** As part of the sample collector's routine evaluation, the State Sampling Manager, or designee, shall accompany the sample collector into the field to observe their sample collection techniques and knowledge of PDP SOPs.

**9.2.3** Evaluations shall include a review of eSIFs to ensure sample information is being obtained and recorded in an acceptable manner.

**9.2.4** Collection problems shall be corrected as they occur and shall include sample collector re-training as necessary.

**9.2.5** Sampling Managers shall keep a record on file of the evaluations each sample collector receives and shall have such records available for viewing by MPD when requested. (Refer to SOP PDP-ADMIN).

## **10. Special Sampling Scenarios:**

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## **10.1 Makeup and Resample**

**10.1.1** When samples are not collected on the assigned day due to unavailability of commodities, weather related impacts, etc., the sample should be collected at a different time and in consultation with MPD and the receiving laboratory (Refer to Section [5.5.9](#)).

**10.1.2** A makeup sample is a sample that was not collected on the assigned day and will be collected on a different scheduled date. State Sampling Managers should coordinate the collection of a makeup sample with the receiving laboratory.

**10.1.3** A resample is a sample that was collected on the assigned day but could not be analyzed by the testing laboratory. A resample may be necessary when the sample is damaged in transport, arrives to the laboratory in poor condition, or is unacceptable based on commodity criteria (weight, variety, etc.). A resample may be required after a viable sample has been received by the testing laboratory.

**10.1.4** Makeup and resamples should be indicated on the eSIF by checking the “Makeup/Replacement Sample?” box found in the Sampling tab of the eSIF application.

## **10.2 Double or Triple Sampling**

**10.2.1** Double or triple sampling refers to extra samples collected during a specified period to make up for times (or seasons) when certain commodities are unavailable and therefore are unable to be collected. This sampling scenario will generally occur during a commodity’s peak availability months (e.g., fresh cranberries in the 4th quarter).

**10.2.2** Double sampling is defined as the collection of twice the assigned monthly number of samples per commodity; for example, double sampling of a given commodity that normally has 7 samples collected per month would entail the collection of 14 samples for that commodity that month.

**10.2.3** Triple sampling is defined as the collection of three times the assigned monthly number of samples per commodity; for example, triple sampling of a given commodity that normally has 7 samples collected per month would entail the collection of 21 samples for that commodity that month.

**10.2.4** Double or triple sampling shall be conducted during the entire designated collection time period unless otherwise directed by MPD.

**10.2.5** Double or triple sampling must be approved by MPD and the NASS statistician and coordinated with the laboratory(ies) receiving the samples.

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**10.2.6** Sampling states that use NASS for quarterly site selection will require additional sites for double and triple sampling. For every month in a quarter a commodity is double sampled, the number of subsets is increased by one. When there is triple sampling, the number of subsets is increased by two.

**10.2.7** Each extra sample shall be collected at a different site OR on a different day than the regularly collected sample of the same commodity. More than one sample must not be collected from the same site on the same day (Refer to Section [6.2.3](#) for exceptions).

**10.2.8** Extra samples may be collected at proxy sites, after attempting to collect at the scheduled primary site and checking for the commodity at an alternate site. A proxy site for a particular distribution center will be considered a completely different site than the primary distribution center site. Guidance in [10.2.10](#) should be followed with regard to selecting samples.

**10.2.9** The sample collector shall ensure that all requested sample information is recorded correctly on the eSIF. Omission of pertinent data may void the extra sample and resampling may be required.

**10.2.10** If double or triple sampling is performed, the sample collector shall ensure that each sample is taken from a different grower, packer, or distributor, or is a different variety. If a product with a different grower, packer, or distributor cannot be found (preferred selection), it is acceptable to sample second or third products with a different lot number.

**10.2.11** When two or more samples are collected from the same site on the same day with different grower, packer, or distributor, or is a different variety or lot number, differentiation shall be made between the samples by entering A through M for a primary site or U through Z for a proxy site in the Source ID Code field of the eSIF and on the sample identification label.

**10.2.12** If special sampling or different labeling distinctions are requested by MPD, the sample collector will find instructions on individual commodity Fact Sheets.

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*Original signed by Amy Gaines*

*9/17/2024*

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- Updated references
- Added Sections 5.5.4 and 5.5.5 to define MPD responsibilities for RDE updates due to sample collector changes
- Clarified chain-of-custody requirements for sample collector on sample label
- Added definition to subsampling
- Added clarifying language to Section 6.1.8 to signify that “U-Z” is used for multiple samples of the same commodity
- Updated eSIF submission instructions throughout SOP to align with new eSIF application export procedures
- Updated section 8 Sampling Information Form and Chain of Custody to include new eSIF application requirements and procedures, including the addition of photo guidance
- Standardized the language for PDP Sampling Training Program sections to allow for the addition of new content
- Updated reference in Section 8.1.11
- Added language for documenting Makeup/Replacement samples in the eSIF application

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- Updated references
- Changed section order for easier readability
- Removed redundant information
- Defined sampling frame
- Added language that retail sites should not be included on Master Site List
- Updated PDP Sampling Manager to PDP Sampling Team
- Removed references to “faxing” and “printing” of documents
- Updated language regarding expired products
- Defined how often MPD provides copies of Master Site List to States for comparison
- Defined how often NASS must review site selection procedures for states that select their own sites
- Added language that Sampling Managers should review provided contact information quarterly
- Added language on PDP Sampling Training Program
- Added requirement for training on RDE eSIF application for sample collectors
- Added language stating that Monday and Tuesday are the preferred sampling days
- Removed sampling objective requirement

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- Clarified language in section 5.1.6 that alternate site info is not required for proxy site samples
  - Added language for subsampling large containers to section 6.3.5
  - Added language that simple errors do not require a CA unless specified in internal SOPs to section 6.4.1.1
  - Specified paper SIFs do not need to be faxed to MPD in section 8.3
  - Dropped the requirement for duplicate labels in section 8.4.4