

Salmonella Enteritidis mandatory testing

Frequently asked questions

An amendment was made to the Biosecurity (Salmonella Enteritidis) Control Order 2020 on 30 June 2020, which included a requirement for all licensed egg businesses in NSW to undertake mandatory Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) testing.

This document features the answers to common questions that are being received. Links to further information are available at the end of this document.

Why is mandatory sampling and testing being introduced?

Salmonella Enteritidis must be prevented from entering the food chain in order to ensure the food we produce is safe and to maintain consumer confidence in the egg industry.

Biosecurity and testing is the best form of defence and the measures we're putting in place will help protect your business and your industry.

Is testing already undertaken on layer farms in NSW?

Approximately 75 percent of NSW layer hens are already tested for SE under voluntary quality assurance programs like the National Salmonella Enteritidis Monitoring and Accreditation Program (NSEMAP).

Bringing this figure to 100 percent will be a significant step toward eradicating the threat SE poses to the NSW egg industry.

Who needs to sample and test?

Every licensed egg business that produces eggs in NSW.

Pullet rearing facilities, breeder farms* and chicken meat farms are not required to conduct sampling and testing for SE.

* Some breeder farms that also produce and sell eggs for consumption under an egg licence will be required to test as a licensed business.

How do I comply with sampling and testing requirements?

There are three options:

1. Join NSEMAP: This voluntary quality assurance program has a relatively small cost and focuses on testing requirements and accreditation processes that will help ensure freedom from SE. For more information on the NSEMAP visit www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/722081/NSEMAP-Guidelines.pdf
2. Undertake sampling and testing in accordance with NSW Department of Primary Industries (NSW DPI) guidelines every 12-15 weeks.
3. Conduct an equivalent testing program to 1 or 2.

When do I need to start sampling and testing?

The requirement to undertake mandatory testing came into effect on 1 July 2020. Producers are required to have conducted their first sampling and testing by 1 October 2020.

Sampling and testing will then be required every 12-15 weeks for the duration of the Control Order.

How do I collect samples?

The number of samples collected, and the location of sample collection is important. This is why farms must implement environmental sampling of poultry sheds / bird housing areas in line with recognised industry procedures.

For NSEMAP accredited farms sampling must be done in accordance with NSEMAP guidelines.

For non-accredited farms, NSW DPI has developed guidelines for sampling.

These guidelines reflect industry practice for SE sampling, such as Australian Eggs Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for SE sampling.

Will NSW DPI fund the cost of testing?

Yes. NSW DPI is funding the cost of laboratory testing one pooled sample test per farm every 12-15 weeks.

NSW DPI's support will remain in place for two years.

Testing must be undertaken at the authorised laboratories listed below and laboratories will invoice NSW DPI directly.

What is a pooled sample?

A pooled sample combines the swabs taken from a farm into one single test.

Who pays to post samples to the laboratory?

The licensed egg business pays for the postage costs.

It is recommended that businesses send samples via Australia Post Express Post satchel or use their own courier.

Which laboratories can I use?

Under this program, egg businesses can choose to have samples tested at either laboratory listed below. Egg businesses who submit samples to either of these laboratories will have testing costs paid for by NSW DPI.

- **Birling Avian Laboratories**

Phone: (02)4774 6100

Postal address: PO Box 111 Bringelly 2556

Delivery address: 975 The Northern Rd, Bringelly NSW 2556

- **NSW DPI Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute**

Phone: 1800 675 623

Email: laboratory.services@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Postal address: Private Bag 4008, Narellan NSW 2567

Delivery address: Woodbridge Road, Menangle NSW 2568

Should samples be kept individually before sending to the laboratory?

Yes. Each individual sample taken should be sealed in a separate container or bag. All the individual bagged samples are then packaged and sent to the laboratory. The samples will be pooled at the laboratory.

Which salmonella strains will be tested?

All samples will be tested for Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) and Salmonella Typhimurium (ST).

Who will receive the sample results?

The sample submitter (usually owner or manager) receives the sample results directly from the laboratory.

NSW DPI will be advised immediately if a positive result for SE is detected.

What happens if a sample result is positive?

The laboratory will inform NSW DPI if a test result is positive for SE.

The laboratory will then perform a further test to confirm this result. The costs of further tests will be paid for NSW DPI.

The lab will also contact the licensed egg business to advise them of a positive result and that further testing is being undertaken.

If the sample is confirmed as SE positive, NSW DPI will investigate the positive result in accordance with the SE Response Program.

To view the SE Response Program visit:

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1184682/salmonella-enteritidis-procedure.pdf

What is the cost if I want to individually test each sample and not pool them?

Individual sample testing is not covered by NSW DPI.

A licensed egg business may choose to have samples individually tested at a cost of approximately \$45 a sample.

Any producer interested in this option should contact the laboratory to discuss arrangements and costing.

How long will it take to get the results?

Results are typically available around five working days after being received by the laboratory.

Delays may be experienced in some cases depending on laboratory workloads.

Can I buy test kits?

Laboratories may be able to supply the items required for testing. Contact the laboratory directly to discuss.

Where can I get more information?

NSW DPI has information available from www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/poultry-and-birds/health-disease/salmonella-enteritidis

A copy of the Control Order is available at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/1149400/Biosecurity-Salmonella-Enteritidis-Control-Order-30-June-2020.pdf

NSEMAP information is available from www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/animals-and-livestock/poultry-and-birds/health-disease/national-salmonella-enteritidis-monitoring-and-accreditation-program

Australian Eggs has resources for producers, including Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for sampling for SE www.australianeggs.org.au/for-farmers/salmonella-risk-assessment-toolkit/

Laboratories will be able to provide information about sample submission and your test results.

Industry veterinarians can assist with advice on how to sample, biosecurity and animal health matters.