



# Temporary Operational Instruction

## **Action note: 2026-02-09 - Packaging and dispatch of trichinella samples from solipeds Chapter 2.4 of the Manual for Official Controls (MOC)**

### **Purpose**

This action note is to inform operational staff of a new temporary operational instruction relating to the packaging and dispatch of solipeds trichinella samples.

### **Background**

Biobest Laboratories Ltd will soon stop testing trichinella samples. The FSA has secured the Irish Equine Centre at Johnstown, Naas, Co. Kildare, Ireland as a temporary alternative laboratory. The FSA will use this laboratory until the Trichinella National Reference Laboratory based in York can start testing solipeds trichinella samples. At

that point, this TOI will be withdrawn and replaced with a new TOI. It is expected that this will be in April 2026.

## Procedure

This TOI amends some elements from section 5 of the MOC Chapter 2.4. However, the solipeds sample description, sample size and pooling of samples remains unchanged.

During week commencing 09/02/2026, the FSA team at the solipeds slaughterhouse will receive at least one ORCA box (ORCA Sample Transport) and 6 ORCA cassettes, together with full instructions on how to condition the cassettes and pack the ORCA box ready for dispatch. The OVs must familiarise themselves with the ORCA box instructions and conditioning of the cassettes ahead of the first dispatch of samples. Please, note that although the manufacturer instructions state that the ORCA cassettes are single use, these can be reused multiple times.

Sample collection must be booked as per MOC instructions via Topspeed online booking system. The OV will need to email [sla.contracts@food.gov.uk](mailto:sla.contracts@food.gov.uk) every Monday morning with the Topspeed traceability barcode number that they will be adding to the top of the box. This barcode is needed for the commercial invoice which will accompany the boxes. The SLA and Contract team will add the barcode to the commercial invoice and email the document to Topspeed, for them to print to accompany the consignment. It is critical that the barcode number provided for the invoice is the same number that has been added to the box as if not the box will be held up at customs.

Solipeds trichinella samples must be taken as per MOC instructions, attaching one barcode label to the sample bag, and one barcode label to the trichinella testing submission form (PMI 4/18).

While completing PMI 4/18 form, ignore the destination labs prepopulated on the form by crossing them with a line and write instead Irish Equine Centre at Johnstown, Naas, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

The Irish Equine Centre requires that samples are dispatched accompanied by their own submission form in addition to the PMI 4/18 forms. One of these submission forms must accompany each consignment. These forms have been pre-populated so that all that needs adding to the form is the date of the sampling, the number of samples (i.e. number of horses sampled), and the barcode numbers of the labels attached to the sample bags and to the PMI 4/18 forms.

The bags containing the samples must be placed in the screw top bottle inside the pathopak box. The pathopak box must then be placed in the middle of the ORCA box between all the cassettes and then have the last cassette added on top. This is to ensure the samples remain chilled but do not freeze.

Together with the ORCA box and the cassettes, the OV will have received some “documents enclosed” envelopes. These are to be used one to keep the sample submission forms dry inside the box and a second one used to attach the import documents to the outside of the ORCA box as detailed below. The OV will have also received two sets of address labels one with the Irish Equine Centre address on for the boxes to get to the lab and the other with the plant address on it so the boxes can be returned for reuse.

The following documents must be placed inside the “documents enclosed” envelope inside the ORCA box, on top of the top cassette:

1. The completed trichinella testing submission forms (PMI 4/18).
2. The completed Irish Equine Centre submission form. A template document will be emailed to the OV by the SLA team.
3. One copy of the Vet 15 licence. This document will be emailed to the OV by the SLA team. There is nothing for the OV to do with this document, just to ensure that one copy goes in the “documents enclosed” envelope in the ORCA box.
4. One copy of the Annex I. This document will be emailed to the OV every Monday (or horse slaughter day) by the SLA team. There is nothing for the OV to do with this document, just to ensure that the received document goes in the “documents enclosed” envelope in the ORCA box.

5. A return address label so the box can be returned to the plant.

The following documents must be placed **inside** the “documents enclosed” envelope and be attached to the **outside** of the ORCA box ready for dispatch:

1. Another copy of the Vet 15 licence. This document will be emailed to the OV by the SLA team. There is nothing for the OV to do with this document, just to ensure that one copy goes in the “documents enclosed” envelope attached to the ORCA box.
2. Another copy of the Annex I. This document will be emailed to the OV every Monday (or horse slaughter day) by the SLA team. There is nothing for the OV to do with this document, just to ensure that the received document goes in the “documents enclosed” envelope attached to the ORCA box.

Please attach the address label for the Irish Equine Centre to the box and ensure any labels with the plant address have been removed before sending.

The Irish Equine Centre will provide the test results to the OV and to the FBO the following day from the email address: [aresidues@irishequinecentre.ie](mailto:aresidues@irishequinecentre.ie)

## **Front line staff are required to note the following action**

Note the contents of the action note, ensuring it is read by all OVs and OAs involved in the packaging and dispatch of trichinella samples from solipeds.

Where necessary, print a copy for the plant file.

## **Distribution**

This action note will be:

- uploaded to the [Temporary Operational Instruction Folder held in the MOC area of SharePoint](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- logged on the [Temporary Operational Instruction tracker](#) (accessible only on an official FSA device)
- published alongside the [MOC chapters on food.gov.uk](#)

The action note will remain live until either incorporated into the MOC or revoked.

Action note drafted by and date	Action note agreed by and date	Published and date
JR 12/02/2026	LGM 12/02/2026	13/02/2026