

PROCEDURES FOR DISPOSAL OF TEST ITEMS

1 General

- 1.1 Store items (or the remainder thereof) which are to be retained after testing so as to minimise any change which could affect the results if the item were to be re-tested.
- 1.2 Discard all associated labels, packaging and seals when disposing of test items except for unsatisfactory labels submitted for comment to the food chemistry section. These are kept in a separated location.
- 1.3 The disposal procedures for specific items are indicated in Table 1.

2 Chemistry

- 2.1 Food samples found to be satisfactory may be discarded two weeks after the issue of the test report.
- 2.2 In the case of unsatisfactory food samples, food complaints samples or water chemistry samples, refer to Table 1.

3 Microbiology

- 3.1 Food samples found to be satisfactory may be discarded as soon as the test results are obtained.
- 3.2 In the case of food complaint samples requiring microbiological examination, follow the procedure for general food complaints (see Table 1).
- 3.3 For samples implicated in food poisoning which are found to be satisfactory, discard the sample after the report has been issued.
- 3.4 Any food samples found to contain pathogenic organisms must not be discarded until at least six months after reporting.

TABLE 1 DISPOSAL PROCEDURES FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS

ITEM	DISPOSAL PROCEDURE
Milk, Cream and Yogurt	Satisfactory:- Discard as soon as the test report has been issued. Unsatisfactory:- Transfer samples to airtight containers and freeze. Retain for six months.
Drinking water	Satisfactory:- Discard as soon as the test report has been issued. Unsatisfactory:- Transfer to sample storage area and retain for one month after reporting.
Food complaints (Perishable)	Place in an airtight container and transfer to freezer. Retain for four months after reporting. Ensure that a receipt is obtained for all uplifted samples.
Food complaints (Non-perishable)	Place in an airtight container and transfer to storage area. Retain for four months after reporting. Ensure that a receipt is obtained for all uplifted samples.
All other Test Items	Satisfactory:- Place in an airtight container and transfer to a freezer or storage area if non-perishable. Dispose two weeks after reporting. Unsatisfactory:- Place in an airtight container and transfer to a freezer or storage area if non-perishable. Retain for at least six months.
Labels submitted for comment	Satisfactory:- For informal samples, dispose after inspection. Unsatisfactory and formal samples:- Transfer to label storage box and retain for at least 6 months. Labels are usually kept longer as they are used for training purposes. Do not dispose of without consulting a public analyst.
Routine Microbiology Food Samples	Discard after testing.
Microbiology Food Samples which are found to contain Pathogens or are part of a food poisoning investigation.	Retain for at least six months after reporting.
Microbiology Water Samples	Discard as soon as the test sample has been filtered.
NO2 tubes	Retain for at least one month after reporting
Partisol filter papers	Retain indefinitely (for potential future analysis of particulates)