

A GUIDE TO FAECES SAMPLING

Fresh faeces offer the best results and are essential for protozoal examination. Aged faeces, i.e. those from litter trays or lawns should be avoided as they are unlikely to yield worthwhile results. Fresh faeces should be placed in a clean container that can be sealed.

- If protozoa are suspected and the sample is not being examined immediately, keep humidity high by placing a small piece of moistened cotton wool in the container. For bacterial culture it is better to take a separate transport swab, especially if *Campylobacter* or *Clostridia* spp. are suspected.
- Viruses are usually detected by antigen demonstration i.e. ELISA or IFA techniques and fresh faecal samples are required. Viral culture and electron microscopy are not routinely recommended.
- Dry swabs should be avoided as anaerobes and microaerophilic bacteria cannot be recovered from these. Charcoal media is recommended for routine work.