



Wiskerchen Cheese Inc. SOP

Title: Environmental Sponging

2.021

Issue Date: 9/4/12	Written By: Jesse Norton	Approved By: John Wiskerchen	Revision # 2	Revision Date: 03/29/2022	Revised By: Nicole Mayfield	Supersedes: 02/15/2016	Page 1 of 1
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Responsible Party: Trained Quality Assurance Staff, Trained Employees

- I. Storage
Store unopened packages of hydra sponges at 32-45 F. Use before the expiration date listed on the package.
- II. Sample Preparation
 1. Remove sponge pouch from original manufacturer's storage bag.
 2. Label sponge pouch with the location code for the area to be sampled.
- III. Sample Procedure
 1. Swabbing procedures shall be conducted by trained plant personnel. When swabbing, protective handling practices (hand sanitizing, wearing gloves, sleeves, aprons, etc.) shall be employed. Zone 1 sites shall be sampled first, followed by zone 2 sites, and followed by zone 3 sites for each RTE line.
 2. Wash your hands per facility hand washing procedures.
 3. Put on a pair of blue nitrile gloves for sampling.
 4. At the location to be sponged:
 - a) Shake stick to end of bag.
 - b) Tear bag open.
 - c) Squeeze bag to open. Aseptically grasp the stick above the thumb-stop line to remove the sponge.
 - d) Aseptically swab across the entire sampling surface.
 - e) Turn sponge over. Change direction 90°. Aseptically swab the same sampled surface.
 - f) Aseptically place sponge into bag up to the thumb-stop.
 - g) Hold sponge in place inside bag. Allow sponge to drop in bag. Discard stick.
 - h) Fold bag to close.
 5. After sampling, immediately return the samples to the lab and refrigerate until they are tested or shipped to the outside testing laboratory. Samples should be properly identified, packaged with ice packs and shipped within 24 hours after sampling. 48 hours should be the maximum time frame for receipt at Labs.