

National Association of Dairy Regulatory Officials



RAW MILK CHEESE FINISHED PRODUCT TESTING

Last Updated: May 6, 2025

Processors seeking to voluntarily test finished product for highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 (HPAI) can contact either Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine Animal Health Diagnostic Center (AHDC) or the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL).

Information for Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine Animal Health Diagnostic Center:

Processors can contact Kristen Eiklor at crt-ahdc@cornell.edu to set up an AHDC client account and receive instructions on how to place an electronic submission through the Animal Health Diagnostic Lab portal.

Costs to Sample Finished Product:

1. Accession (Administrative) fee: \$8.00. This is a one-time fee charged per accession independent of the number of samples submitted.
2. RT-PCR¹ (pan-influenza A Matrix): \$41 per cheese sample. Each cheese block/lot submitted will be processed as an individual sample and the test charge will apply.
3. RT-PCR (H5-specific): \$41 per cheese sample. This testing is only performed if the pan-influenza A Matrix PCR test is positive.
4. Virus isolation: \$83.25 per cheese sample. This testing is only performed if the pan-influenza A Matrix PCR test is positive and is conducted in embryonated chicken eggs to determine virus infectivity. This will detect if there is infectious virus in the product.
5. Whole genome sequencing: \$250 per cheese sample. Only performed if requested by the processor for further epidemiological investigation.

Information for Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory:

WVDL provides testing for finished products of aged raw milk cheeses for H5N1 influenza A, or highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). WVDL is a partner laboratory with the Cornell Animal Health Diagnostic Center, both of which are National Animal Health Laboratory Level 1 facilities accredited by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians.

Please visit our website for resources, including contact information and low-cost shipping options. WVDL can provide testing kits and shipping labels as needed.

www.wvdl.wisc.edu 1-800-608-8387

Costs to Sample Finished Product:

1. Accession fee: \$10.00
2. PCR of individual samples (influenza A Matrix): \$50 per cheese sample. Each cheese block/lot submitted. -PCR testing is very sensitive and detects the RNA of the virus in the sample but does not necessarily prove live virus or risk to food safety. Further confirmation testing that is H5 specific, virus isolation, and whole genome sequencing can be done upon request, with a low likelihood of detection.

Please note, to the best of NADRO's understanding, to-date HPAI has not been declared an adulterant in finished dairy products by federal agencies.

¹ A PCR test shows if there is genetic material or DNA of the virus in the raw milk cheese. Virus isolation determines if the virus is still active.