

Sampling for in-house control at shops

Shops that prepare unpackaged perishable foodstuffs and/or make ice are required to carry out sampling as part of their in-house control. These instructions are a condensed version of the Finnish Food Authority's sampling instructions (only available in Finnish and Swedish). All the tests and the required sample quantities are shown in the table at the end of the instructions.

Surface cleanliness samples

You can carry out surface cleanliness sampling yourself, for example with Hygicult TPC tests, or you can contract out the sampling to a designated food laboratory. The sampling must cover all surfaces that come into direct contact with foodstuffs. Such surfaces include **cutting boards, worktops, tools and equipment (such as a vegetable slicer)**. The samples are to be taken from clean and dry surfaces, e.g. in the morning before starting work in the kitchen.

Listeria samples (surface and foodstuff samples)

If the establishment prepares products that have a **shelf life of 5 days (1+4) or more** and in which Listeria can grow, the establishment also needs to take Listeria surface samples and foodstuff samples. Such products include fresh salads, sandwiches, dry-cured fish and cold-smoked fish. Listeria samples must also be taken from any minced meat packaged in a modified atmosphere in the shop if its shelf life is 5 days or more, unless there is a heating requirement on the packaging (e.g. "kuumennettava ennen nauttimista" ("heat before consumption")). Listeria samples must be taken from surfaces during preparation after at least two hours of operation or at the end of preparation before cleaning.

Salmonella samples (surface and foodstuff samples)

Surface and foodstuff samples must be taken for salmonella testing when minced meat or meat products are prepared in the shop **from foreign meat (beef, pork, poultry) that is not covered by the special guarantees concerning salmonella**. Surface samples for salmonella testing must be taken from equipment such as mincers, saws and other similar equipment and tools and from worktops and handles. The surface samples for salmonella testing must be taken from surfaces during preparation after at least two hours of operation or at the end of preparation before cleaning.

Minced meat and meat preparation samples

Foodstuff samples must be taken from minced meat and meat preparations prepared in the shop. The tests and sample quantities depend on whether the meat used is Finnish or foreign meat that is not covered by the special guarantees concerning salmonella.

Ice samples

If the establishment has an ice cube maker, the quality of the ice must be tested once a year, either by sampling the ice or, alternatively, by taking surface cleanliness samples from the ice cube maker. For more information, please see the Finnish Food Authority's [instructions \(only available in Finnish and Swedish\)](#).

Durability studies on products packaged in modified atmosphere

When a shop starts to package foodstuffs such as meat and fish in a modified atmosphere, the shelf life must be determined separately for each product group. For advice on durability studies, you can turn to the supervisor of the food premises. Samples for durability studies must be taken from normally prepared products and should be representative of actual conditions in the shop. Samples must be taken from at least three different production batches, each of which is analysed in three parallel samples (subsamples) on at least two days (the day of preparation and one day after the intended last day of use), meaning that the total number of samples is 18. If the planned shelf life is long, durability studies must be performed on additional days.

Monitoring results

The results of tested samples must be recorded. Any corrective measures taken in response to poor test results and the results of repeat samples must also be recorded. If results deteriorate in the long term, more effective corrective measures must be taken. The trend in results is easy to see using the so-called traffic light model, where good results are marked in green, passable results are marked in yellow and poor results are marked in red.

Food Safety Unit

kymp.elintarviketurvallisuus@hel.fi

City of Helsinki

Services and Permits, Environmental Services

PL 58235, 00099 Helsingin kaupunki

Food business | City of Helsinki

Production quantity / Sample	Sampling frequency/ year	Number of subsamples	Tests
ice (made by the shop)	1	1	<i>Escherichia coli</i> , coliform bacteria, enterococci
Moderate-risk ready-to-eat foodstuffs prepared in the shop (e.g. fresh salads, sandwiches, ready meals, meat and fish balls and patties, light cured sausages, warm smoked fish and sliced or vacuum-packed meat products) if the shelf life is 5 days or more			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	0	0	
shop's annual production 10,000 -	2	5	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (tested on the last day of use)
High-risk ready-to-eat foodstuffs prepared in the shop (e.g. salt cured and cold smoked fish, soft cheese made from unpasteurised milk, products containing brawn (e.g. sandwiches, salads or stuffing), brawn or salt cured meat) if the shelf life is 5 days or more			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	2	5	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (tested on the last day of use)
shop's annual production 10,000 -	4	5	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (tested on the last day of use)
Cooked crustaceans and molluscs prepared in the shop (especially when foreign crustaceans and molluscs are used)			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	0	0	
shop's annual production 10,000 -	2	5	Salmonella
Minced meat (beef, pork, poultry) prepared in the shop when the meat used is of Finnish origin and the shelf life after mincing is 24 hours or more			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	0 or 1	5	aerobic microorganisms when the shelf life of the minced meat
	0 or 2	5	<i>E. coli</i> if the minced meat is to be eaten raw or used to prepare patties cooked to medium
shop's annual production 10,000 - 100,000 kg	4 - 8	5	aerobic microorganisms when the shelf life of the minced meat
			<i>E. coli</i>
Meat preparations prepared in the shop, e.g. cut, seasoned and marinated meat, when the meat used is of Finnish origin			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	0	0	
shop's annual production 10,000 -	4 - 8	5	<i>E. coli</i>
Minced meat and meat preparations (beef, pork, poultry) prepared in the shop when the meat used is of foreign origin (not covered by the special guarantees concerning salmonella)			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	4	5	Salmonella (tested on the last day of use)
	0 or 1	5	aerobic microorganisms from minced meat when the shelf life of the minced meat is 24 hours or longer
	0 or 2	5	<i>E. coli</i> from minced meat if it is to be eaten raw or used to prepare patties cooked to medium
shop's annual production 10,000 - 100,000 kg	8	5	Salmonella (tested on the last day of use)
	4 - 8	5	aerobic microorganisms from minced meat when the shelf life of the minced meat is 24 hours or longer
	4 - 8	5	<i>E. coli</i>
Foreign poultry preparations (e.g. pre-cooked poultry products) prepared in the shop			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	4	5	Salmonella (tested on the last day of use)
shop's annual production 10,000 -	8	5	Salmonella (tested on the last day of use)
Production quantity / Sample	Sampling frequency/ year	Number of subsamples	Tests
Surface cleanliness sample, cleanliness monitoring			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	2 - 4*	5	aerobic microorganisms or enterobacteria
shop's annual production 10,000 -	6 - 8	5	aerobic microorganisms or enterobacteria
Surface sample, <i>Listeria monocytogenes</i> (the shop prepares ready-to-eat foodstuffs (e.g. smoked fish/sandwiches/ready meals) with a shelf life of 5 days or more)			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	4 - 6	5	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>
shop's annual production 10,000 -	6 - 8	5	<i>Listeria monocytogenes</i>
Surface sample, Salmonella (the shop prepares minced meat or meat products from meat that is not covered by the special guarantees concerning salmonella)			
shop's annual production < 10,000 kg	4 - 6	5	Salmonella
shop's annual production 10,000 -	8 - 10	5	Salmonella