New Blood Collection Method

Thanks to new developments here at Gene Check, we are now able to implement a new blood card collection process for blood used in DNA testing. This system can be used to collect blood for Scrapie Susceptibility, Spider lamb syndrome, parentage and PSS testing. The testing procedures remain the same for us here at Gene Check, but the cost savings and ease of use for our customers could be substantial. These blood cards will not replace blood tubes for Gene Check DNA testing, but simply give our customers an additional option when it comes to blood collection.

Blood Collecting with Blood Cards

One of the advantages of the Gene Check Blood Card system is that it is so easy to collect the blood. If you are comfortable using a syringe to collect into blood tubes, you can continue to use the same method for the blood cards. Just put a drop of blood on each spot of the Blood Card. Use a fresh syringe for each blood draw. However, you need so little blood for the cards that other methods will work as well, do not require expertise at blood drawing and are less expensive.

Ear Nick. Wipe the back of the ear with alcohol. Using the corner of a clean razor blade, prick the ear deeply enough to draw blood. Touch the Blood Card to the blood drop. It should be possible to get sufficient blood from a single incision to fill each spot on the Blood Card. Sheep will bleed more readily if the ear is lower than the body. Therefore, it is generally a good idea to have the sheep laying on the ground or on its side in a turning cradle. Massage the ear to increase blood flow. Do not allow dirt to contaminate the incision site. Wipe the site with alcohol after collecting. Note: the razor blade may be reused if cleaned thoroughly with alcohol immediately after use.

Tail Docking. If you use a method of tail docking that involves cutting, you can use the opportunity to collect blood for later DNA testing (See Storing Blood Cards). Simply touch a drop of blood to each spot on the Blood Card. You can use either the dock or the tail. Keep instruments and blood cards clean.

Blood Card Handling

Each card has five circles. Each circle needs one to two drops of blood. It is not necessary to keep the blood within the circles, they are only a reference as to how much blood is needed. Keep in mind that the blood must dry on the cards. Try not to over saturate the card or you will need to lay it out to dry within a few hours of collecting. Do not stack cards directly on top of one another without a barrier between them (plastic bag, paper etc.) as this could cause contamination. Label each card with the date of collection and the ID# or name of the animal.

Shipping Blood Cards

Your shipping cost for blood cards will be much less than for blood tubes. Cards are much lighter than tubes, do not require special packing materials or ice packs and can be mailed in an envelope or small box via regular mail. Because blood cards do not need to be chilled or shipped cold, there is no need to use costly overnight or priority mail service. You can, of course, still use these services if you need your results in a hurry.

Blood Card Storage

You can collect blood at your convenience and store it at home for several months. It is possible that blood cards can be stored for as long as 1-2 years but there have not been any long term studies to confirm this. Therefore, we currently recommend storing for no longer than 6 months.

Ordering Blood Cards

Blood cards are inexpensive (10 for only $5.00) and can be ordered directly from Gene Check simply by calling us at (800) 822-6740.

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