NDSU VETERINARY DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY

Water Quality Analysis and Blue-Green Algae Collection Guide

Water Sample Collection:

- Collect a minimum of 50 mL of the sample (250 mL preferred) in a plastic container. Sample water from where the cattle drink, especially for blue-green algae. Take the water sample in the blue-green bloom and wear gloves.
- If collecting the sample in a plastic bottled water container, rinse out the container in the sample water, take a surface water sample and a sample deeper in the water column. Label sample with an ID using a black marker. Seal tightly and wrap the top with tape to prevent leaking. Place the water container in a sealable plastic bag.
- Tip: Collect the sample early in the week and submit the sample before Friday to avoid delay due to weekend shipment hold-up.

Water Quality Analysis Storage:

- The sample may be stored in the fridge, but an ice pack during shipment is not required.
- No time restrictions on sample viability, but typically water should be analyzed within a few days of collection.
- If producers would like additional tests, contact the laboratory for any special conditions for handling/time.
- Note: If time is a factor, send the sample by courier overnight. If the sample is received before 10:30 AM, the report is generally available by 5 PM. Time delay is typically due to delays in shipment.

Blue-Green Algae (*Cyanobacteria*) Storage:

- Ship the sample immediately on an ice pack by next-day delivery. Avoid temperature extremes- do not freeze the sample or leave it on the dash of your vehicle.

Fill out the VDL General Submission Form:

- Include owner information, phone number, and email for quick response with a report. Be sure to mark "Water" and include the number of samples submitted in the appropriate sample field. Record the request for WATER SCREEN and/or BLUE-GREEN ALGAE in the "Special Request" or "History" fields.

Analysis of water for animal and livestock consumption only. For analysis of water for human consumption, please contact the North Dakota Department of Health.