

Shellfish Biotoxin Testing in Tasmania

In May of 2017 Jeremy Rockliff, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, announced a \$1.2 million capital investment to create a world-class biotoxin testing facility in Hobart for Tasmania's shellfish industry.

The capital investment enabled facilities to be upgraded within Analytical Services Tasmania (AST) at New Town. The upgrade includes state-of-the-art equipment with backup instrumentation to ensure testing continuity. This is coupled with a year round service model capable of operating over the busy holiday periods when market access is critical.

What will change?

The testing service will commence on Monday the 4th of December. Up until then, the regulatory samples for biotoxin testing still need to be sent to TSQAP for testing at Symbio Laboratories in NSW.

On the week commencing the 4th of December samples must be submitted directly to AST at 18 St Johns Avenue New Town ([Map](#)). Note that after this date TSQAP will no longer receive or forward samples for biotoxin testing.

Test results will be sent to the sampler, growers in the growing area, and TSQAP.

Sample containers will be supplied directly by AST.

Service details

The upgraded AST facility provides:

- Testing earlier in the week. Samples can arrive Monday morning and testing will commence the same day.
- Faster turnaround time.
- Two testing days per week; Mondays and Wednesdays.
- Service continuing over during the Christmas and Easter breaks
- Reduced unforeseen breaks in service from staff or equipment down time

To ensure fast turnaround there needs to be a cut off time for receiving samples. Samples must be received at AST no later than **10:00am** on the testing days. Samples submitted after that time will be added to the next analytical run. i.e. the next Wednesday or Monday.

Service details cont.

Screen Test Results: Reported the next day. That is Tuesday for samples submitted by 10:00am Monday, and Thursday for samples submitted by 10:00am Wednesday.

Confirmation Test Results: Reported the following day after screen results when required. That is Wednesday for samples submitted by 10:00am Monday, and Friday for samples submitted by 10:00am Wednesday.

Samplers and growers from higher risk growing areas are encouraged to submit samples for the Monday test run to provide growers extra time to respond to any positive test results.

In addition, it is encouraged that hand delivered or couriered samples also be tested Mondays. This is something that AST can discuss with samplers to find a solution that works best.

More information

AST will contact samplers in the last week of November to discuss the changeover between testing services and solve any issues that may arise from the changes. This includes provision of sample bottles, sample submission issues, and any specific needs for test result reporting such as text messages or phone calls for exceedance results.

If during the transition samples arrive at TSQAP instead of AST there will be a temporary arrangement to get the samples to AST.

For more information on testing please call AST (03) 6165 3300.

For information on the TSQAP (Shell MAP) agreement negotiations contact [Oyster Tasmania](#).



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