

DNA Testing Tips and Tricks

We've officially been with Weatherbys Scientific for more than six months — and upwards of 15,000 genotypes have already been completed. As a reminder, all defects are now included in the genomic profile. The only option for add-on testing is the horned/polled (H/P) test, now at a lower rate. Including the H/P testing in your genomic profile adds an additional \$8 to the cost.

It's always better to request all testing at once. If you do not request all testing and add the H/P test at later date, it does cost more — \$30 instead of just \$8. As well, the sample may no longer be on file for additional testing, depending on the timing.

When you request an add-on H/P test, several things happen. First, we must find when and where the original sample was tested. If the original sample was tested at Neogen, we may not have that sample in our possession to do the add-on testing. The American Hereford Association (AHA) is currently working with Neogen to retrieve all DNA samples submitted in 2025 and prior to the transition to Weatherbys. Until then, some samples submitted in 2025 may not be available for additional testing.

If we do have the sample, it will be pulled from storage and sent back to Weatherbys for testing. This adds extra time to the testing

process. This is why it's always best to request all testing, all at once. If the original sample was tested at Weatherbys, the additional H/P test can be done easily and quickly.

For the best turnaround time, we suggest getting your DNA samples to ETC-Research by Thursday or Friday of each week. This helps ensure processing starts the following week.

Moving forward, the AHA encourages you to always collect and store an additional sample on any animals you're testing or even animals you may need to test in the future. Having an extra sample on hand is always a good safety net for any potential future testing.

DNA sample types and proper storage

Below is a list of accepted DNA sample types and tips for proper storage.

1. Hair or blood cards: These types of samples can be stored in a dark dry place at room temperature.
2. Semen: The semen can be thawed, but it is suggested to keep it frozen until a DNA test is needed.
 - Note: When shipping semen samples, make sure they are protected. We suggest a padded envelope or box as the semen straw can easily break in the mail.

3. Tissue sample units (TSUs): These can be stored in several ways.

- The preferred method of storing is in a negative thaw cycle freezer, but they can be stored in a regular freezer.
- There has been success in storing them in a cool dry place. Some TSUs have been stored this way for three years and are still viable.
- The biggest thing is to protect them from sunlight. For example, don't leave them inside a hot vehicle or in direct sunlight.
- Note: Like shipping semen, TSUs should be shipped in a protected envelope or box to ensure they arrive intact.

As always, if you have any questions about the DNA process (requesting tests, collecting samples, getting results, sample storage, etc.), please don't hesitate to contact customer service via phone at 816-842-3757 or email at records@hereford.org. **HW**

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