

## 5.7 Tip Sheet: How do I make flat files to use data in programs outside of QWDATA?

This tip sheet describes the basic steps required to make a flat file using column-style (by-sample) output. If you would like to make a flat file using row-style (by-result) output, refer to [section 3.4.6](#). Flat files do not include titles or column headings, but are simple columns of data. This type of output is typically used for simple data reviews or to enter data into other software. Links to sections in the documentation that contain details for certain topics are included in this tip sheet. The user should refer to those sections for details that are not presented in this tip sheet.

- ❖ You must have a file of record numbers before beginning the tabling program. Create this file if you do not already have it. See [section 3.3.1](#) or [Tip Sheet 5.12](#) for more information about retrieving records.
- ❖ Choose option 4 – *Data Output* from the main QWDATA menu.
- ❖ Choose option 5 – *Flat File by Sample* from the Data Output menu.
- ❖ Six options are available to create a flat file using by-sample output:

### qwtable -- Flat file (by sample)

**You have 6 options for flatfile output:**

- 1 -- Fixed column flat file (qwflatout)**
- 2 -- Flat file with TAB delimiter (RDB format)**
- 3 -- Flat file with user-specified delimiter**

**(Following options include method code in output)**

- 4 -- Fixed column flat file (qwflatoutm)**
- 5 -- Flat file with TAB delimiter (RDB format)**
- 6 -- Flat file with user-specified delimiter**

**Enter option desired (1-6, <CR>=1):**

- ✓ Option 1 produces two files: one with the data in fixed columns separated by spaces and the other containing a list of parameter names. This option can be used to import the data to other programs; however, delimited files are better for some programs (see option 3).
- ✓ Option 2 produces a tab-delimited RDB file with header lines at the top of the file containing parameter and format information followed by the data. Only those users wishing to use the RDB capabilities should choose this option.
- ✓ Option 3 produces two files: one with the data delimited by the user-defined delimiter and the other containing a list of parameter names. This option can be used to import the

data to other programs.

- ✓ Options 4-6 are similar to options 1-3, but the output also includes method codes when method codes exist with a result. This option creates an extra space or column for each parameter specified in the parameter list to hold a method code; in some cases this column may be blank because no method code exists.

\* See [section 3.4.5](#) for more details about these options.\*

- ❖ Each option has the following prompts:

- ✓ Options 1 and 4:

**Enter name of file containing record numbers (Q to quit):**  
**Enter name of file to hold output –**

- ✓ Options 2 and 5:

**Do you want remarks and values to be delimited (Y/N,<CR>=Y)?**  
**Enter name of file containing record numbers (Q to quit):**  
**Enter name of file to hold output –**

- ✓ Options 3 and 6:

**Enter column separator char or TAB for tab char:**  
**Do you want remarks and values to be delimited (Y/N,<CR>=Y)?**  
**Enter name of file containing record numbers (Q to quit):**  
**Enter name of file to hold output –**

- ✓ Options 2, 5, 3, and 6 allow you to separate remarks, such as < or E, into a different column from the values by answering 'Y' to that prompt. For options 3 and 6, any character may be used as a column separator, but the most common are tabs, commas, and slashes.

- ❖ Provide parameter codes to be tabled. This may be done interactively or by providing a file name for a file containing the parameter codes. See [section 3.4.3.3](#) for more information about providing parameter codes and [Appendix G](#) for the format of a parameter code file.

- ❖ Choose table output options from the screen 'qwtable -- current selections for options'. See [section 3.4.3.4](#) for detailed information on table output options. Following is the table options screen, X's indicate the default settings:

```
qwtable -- current selections for options

(1) Results Included in Table:      X_Historical, Accepted, or presumed OK
                                   __ User Specified

(2) Parameter Order:                X_Publication Order __As Supplied

(3) Rounding of Result Values:      X_PCD __User __None

(4) Censoring of Zero Values:       X_None __User Specified

(5) Recensoring of Values:          X_None __User Specified

(6) Qualifiers in Output:           __Yes X_No

(7) Footnotes:                      __None X_Remarks __Qualifiers
```

**Note: A user with only read access to the database will be able to only retrieve results with data quality indicator (DQI) codes of A – historical, S – presumed satisfactory, R – reviewed and accepted, or Q – reviewed and rejected. A user must have write access to retrieve results for DQI codes of I – methods in review, U – unapproved result or laboratory, or P,O, or X – proprietary results.**

- ❖ After the file is retrieved, you can create another flat file with the same format by entering a 'Y' at the next prompt and the tabling program will begin again. If another table is not required, type CR or N at the prompt.