

UMD Plant Diagnostic Lab Sample Submission Guidelines

General Guidelines:

1. Collect fresh specimens and ship to the lab as soon as possible. If shipping must be delayed, store sample(s) in a cool place until they can be sent.
2. Send a full range of tissue, both healthy and diseased. Do not send plant material that is completely dead or dried - such tissue if colonized by secondary microorganisms may interfere with detection of primary pathogens. Do not add water or wet paper towels.
3. Pack sample(s) in a crush-proof box and send via overnight or second-day carrier. Do not mail samples at the end of the week- they may not be delivered and deteriorate over the weekend.
4. It is important that you try to collect the sample prior to any pesticide applications. Once pesticides have been applied it may be difficult to obtain an accurate diagnosis.
5. Photos of the site are helpful – email to plantlab@umd.edu or print and send with sample.
6. Fill out a Plant Sample Submission Form and submit it with your sample. A PDF of the form can be found at <https://go.umd.edu/plantlab>. Provide as much information as possible, including name of the plant, symptoms of concern, how long in the site (for landscape specimens) and any pesticides used. The more information provided, the easier it is for the diagnosticians to make an accurate diagnosis.

Packing Guidelines by Sample Type:

1. **Leaves and other soft green tissue:** Wrap in dry newspaper, enclose in a resealable bag, and pack in a crush-proof container.
2. **Whole plants:** If a root or soil problem is suspected, or the plant is generally declining, collect the entire plant. Dig the plant to obtain as many roots as possible. Wrap roots in a plastic bag and secure around stem to contain soil, wrap entire plant in dry newspaper, and pack in a crush-proof container.
3. **Woody branches/stems:**
 - If vascular wilt is suspected, collect wilting (not completely dead) branches at least 1/2" in diameter, wrap in dry newspaper, and pack in a crush-proof container.
 - If a canker problem is suspected, collect stems with both healthy and diseased portions on same branch, wrap in dry newspaper, and pack in a crush-proof container.
4. **Turf samples:** Collect turf plugs (at least 4" in diameter) that include both healthy and diseased grass. Wrap in tin foil and pack in a crush-proof container (surround plugs with packing material to keep them from moving in the box).
5. **Soil/root sample:** If a root issue or soil-borne pathogen is suspected, and the plant is too large to submit, collect and send roots and a quart-sized bag of soil dug from the root zone of the plant. Pack in a crush-proof container.

Mailing Address: 4291 Fieldhouse Drive, 4112 Plant Sciences Building, College Park, MD 20724-4454

Drop-off Address: 4291 Fieldhouse Drive, 3169 Plant Sciences Building, College Park, MD 20724

Contact us with any questions prior to your sample submission. The clinic staff works hard to provide you with fast, accurate results. Average turnaround time is 2 weeks.

Email: plantlab@umd.edu

Phone: (301) 405-0730

Fax: (301) 314-9290

Visit our website for more information and resources to help keep your plants healthy!

<https://go.umd.edu/plantlab>