

Plant Diagnostic Laboratory

Sample Collection, Packaging and Shipping Guidelines for Plant Samples

Images are encouraged for all plant samples
Please submit images to plantlab@uri.edu.

Sample Collection

- All specimens should be fresh when collected.
- Be sure to collect a representative sample showing the plant in various stages of decline, if possible.
- Examine the plant and determine what part of the sample is diseased.

For leaf spots or leaf holes:

- ★ Submit multiple leaves still attached to their stems or branches if possible. Place individual leaves not attached to the stem between layers of DRY paper towel; this prevents added moisture and retains the leaf's shape if it dries out in transit.
- ★ Leaves should show the spots and holes. If there are symptomatic leaves with regular, healthy leaf coloring regions, send multiple leaves showing the range of symptoms. Wrap the leaves and if possible, leaves still attached to their stems/branches in a paper towel or newspaper that you place in a dry plastic bag.

For cankers/ galls on twigs or branches:

- ★ Inspect the whole branch/twigs for holes or cankers. Collect a sample by cutting 3 inches below the damaged part of the plant, ideally where there is still green tissue. Large branches can be cut to fit inside a cardboard box.

For fruit rot:

- ★ Fresh fruit should be enclosed in dry paper bags. All other samples should be

sealed in dry plastic bags. Do not add wet paper towels or water to samples or bags.

For plant dieback/ browning and root rot:

- ★ If the leaf or leaf is yellowing, browning, wilting, or if the plant is wilting, stunting, or in decline, a whole plant should be submitted.
- ★ Carefully dig up the plant so as not to damage the roots; avoid pulling the plant up after digging it out.
- ★ Shake the plant to free the roots from excess soil – do not wash the soil off roots.
- ★ *Cover the root ball with a plastic bag that can be closed around the base of the plant with a rubber band. Place the entire plant (including the bagged roots) in another plastic bag.*
- ★ Provide samples from the roots, stem, and leaves if not practical to submit the whole plant. Provide a two foot section of the stem attached to the symptomatic leaves.
- ★ Roots should be collected by removing soil from a side of the plant. It is desirable to get a sample from the deeper roots. Roots should be placed alone in a separate plastic bag.

Sample Packing and Shipping

1. Complete the Plant Sample Submission Form. Provide as much of the information we request as possible – this will help us diagnose the issue!
2. Send images or photos to plantlab@uri.edu with [Plant Sample photos_Your Name] in the subject line of the email.
3. Include a check payable to “URI” for \$20.00 per plant sample with the sample and form.
4. Place the sample with the specimen in a padded mailer envelope or box, along with your payment and the completed form.
5. Ship the sample early in the week to prevent samples sitting in the mail over the weekend.
6. Mail your sample to:

Kathleen M. Mallon Outreach Center

c/o Plant Diagnostic

Laboratory

3 East Alumni Avenue

Kingston, RI 02881

A diagnostic report will be sent to your email within 5 to 10 days.