



Home and Garden Information Center • 12005 Homewood Road • Ellicott City, MD 21024 • 800-342-2507 • www.hgic.umd.edu

Home & Garden Mimeo # HG 500

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PLANT OR INSECT SAMPLES

It is recommended that you speak with one of our Horticulture Consultants (1-800-342-2507) before submitting your sample.

Background information and a quality sample are very important when diagnosing a problem. Please provide us with this information by following the instructions below and completing the sample data sheet. **There is a charge of \$15.00 for each sample.**

FOR PLANTS:

A plant sample should be mailed, pressed flat between layers of paper, cardboard, or newspaper. **Do not wrap in plastic or foil.** Select a quality sample that is not completely dead. A sample that includes healthy as well as symptomatic growth is preferred. Complete the Plant and Insect Sample Data Sheet (next page). Provide background information explaining the history of the plant and the problem. Photos may also be helpful. Pack the sample in a sturdy box or mailing envelope that will not crush during shipping. Mail sample as soon as possible after collecting.

For plant identification, submit a sample complete with twigs, leaves, and fruit or seed, if possible. Complete the Plant and Insect Sample Data Sheet. We will identify a plant by its common name. Pack the sample as described above.

We do not accept turf samples.

FOR INSECTS:

Crushed, damaged specimens are very difficult to identify. When possible, collect more than one insect for evaluation. Single specimens are often difficult to identify and the possibility of damage in the mail is great. Use sturdy containers to prevent damage when shipping. **Do not put specimens on tape. Do not wrap specimen(s) in facial tissues or cotton.**

Insects such as flies, aphids, ants (or any tiny insects), grubs, and caterpillars must be preserved in glass or plastic vials containing alcohol. Make sure the container is leak proof. Wrap it securely in bubble wrap or other packing material to prevent breakage during shipping.

Insects such as beetles, wasps, crickets etc. may be packaged in layers of tissue paper and placed in a pill bottle or crush proof container to increase the chances of the specimen arriving intact. Cushion specimen with additional packing material when shipping.

All moths and butterflies have scales on the wings that are needed for identification. They need to be kept dry. Do not crush. Carefully wrap in paper and place in a crush proof container.

****FOR ALL SAMPLES - PLEASE COMPLETE THE PLANT AND INSECT SAMPLE DATA SHEET ON THE REVERSE SIDE****

Mail sample(s) to:
The University of Maryland, Home and Garden Information Center
12005 Homewood Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042
For each sample, include a \$15.00 check or money order: payable to the University of Maryland
DO NOT SEND CASH.

PLANT AND INSECT SAMPLE DATA SHEET

Name: _____

Address: _____

County: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Check all that apply: **Plant identification** **Insect identification** **Plant problem diagnosis**

PLANT SAMPLE:

Location: Landscape planting Flower Garden Vegetable/Fruit
 Houseplant Other: _____

Exposure: Full sun Partial sun Shade Windy

Description of Problem: (Please include in your description: new construction/excavation, chemical applications – pesticides & fertilizers, poor drainage – water retention in the soil, burlapped or container grown plants, when problem first started, etc.)

INSECT SAMPLE:

Please check all that apply:

Insects found on:

Ornamental Plants Vegetables Turf Fruits Houseplants

Found outdoors, not on a plant Found in the home: Location _____

Other: _____

Description of Problem:

WE ONLY ACCEPT SAMPLES FROM MARYLAND
Attach additional information or photos if desired.