

# Submitting Plant Disease Specimens

**Extension Agents:** please use the Plant Diagnostic Information System (PDIS), [www.pdis.org](http://www.pdis.org), to submit specimen information and remember to send the specimen with a print out of the sample summary. If you have any questions about PDIS, please contact Linnea Skoglund, (406) 994-5150.

1. **Send sufficient plant material.** Whenever it is practical, include roots. If that can't be done, then include a branch. If that can't be done then send a twig. Detached leaves or parts of leaves are seldom useful.
2. **Keep some soil around the root ball and off foliage.** Wrap this in plastic and secure with rubber band around the base of the plant. Loosely enclose the foliage in plastic or paper.
3. Collect samples with **mild, moderate, and severe symptoms** as well as a **healthy** comparison.
4. **Package samples in crush-proof containers** so that when they arrive in the Clinic, we could re-pot them and have the plants survive!
5. **Do not send dried samples.** Keep samples as fresh as possible until you can ship them; refrigerate if possible. Package in plastic bags. Do not add water.
6. **Do not ship on Fridays.** Samples can bake or freeze over the weekend.
7. Include photographs illustrating the problem if possible. Email to [diagnostics@montana.edu](mailto:diagnostics@montana.edu).

**Mail to:** Schutter Diagnostic Lab, 119 Plant BioScience Facility, P.O. Box 173150, Bozeman, MT 59717-3150. Please mail a copy of the PDIS summary or other form with the sample.

**Always include background information. Plant problems often are influenced by many different factors, so include as much information as possible:**

- Plant and variety
- Location (greenhouse, field, windbreak, home garden, etc.)
- Irrigation practices (type of system, frequency, amount applied)
- History (age, size, amendments, fertilizer, etc.)
- Pesticides used with names, rates, and dates
- Weather conditions
- Pattern of symptoms on the plant and surrounding plants
- Previous problems in this location

## Remember!

**The diagnosis you receive will only be as good at the sample received. Don't waste time. Do it right the first time.**