Submitting Plant Disease Specimens

Extension Agents: please use the Plant Diagnostic Information System (PDIS), 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.

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.