

# Sending plant and insect samples to ISU

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## Plants: How to provide an informative sample

### In general...

- Provide plenty of plant material. When possible, send the entire plant, including roots and top growth.
- Provide detailed information. Include photos when possible. Videos are welcome and can be returned to the client.
- Provide freshly collected specimens.
- Include enough plant material to show all stages of the disease from healthy to very sick.
- Wrap specimens in paper towels or clean newspapers. Do not add moisture. Pack loosely in a plastic bag to reduce drying. Mail in a strong container.

### For specific plant...

- **Woody plants:** Collect samples only from branches that are showing symptoms but are not dead. For Dutch elm disease and oak wilt testing, branch specimens should consist of 4 to 6 pieces, measuring 6 to 8 inches in length, and ½ to 1 inch in thickness.
- **Turf:** Lift out a 6-by 6-inch section of turf with the roots. Include sick plants, those on the margin, and healthy plants.
- **Fleshy plant parts (bulbs, tubers, fruits, roots):** Wrap specimens in enough clean, absorbent material (such as paper towels) to absorb all leaks. Mail in a strong container.
- **Other plants (annuals, perennials, vegetables, house plants):** Include the entire plant.
- **Field crops:** Include a cropping history and the pattern of symptoms in the field.

### Please use the following forms:

For horticultural and field crop diseases, use “Plant Disease Identification Form” (PD 31).

For soil samples to be tested for soybean cyst nematode or root samples submitted for complete nematodes analysis, use “Plant Nematode Sample Submission Form” (PD 32).

For herbicide and weed identification, use “Weed ID and Herbicide Injury Diagnosis Form” (AG 146).

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## Insects: How to provide an informative sample

### In general...

- Include plant samples showing insect damage. Wrap them in a paper towel and put in a plastic bag.
- Include a label with location, date collected, and collector's name in each container.
- Mail in a strong container.

### For “soft” specimens (insect larvae, aphids, mites)...

Place specimens in a small bottle with a preservative, such as rubbing alcohol.

### For “hard” specimens (beetles, moths)...

Place specimens in a noncrushable container loosely filled with crumpled tissue.

### Please use the following form:

For insects and insect damage, use “Insect Information Request Form” (IC 449).

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