

## Submitting Samples for Diagnosis to the Crop Diagnostic Centre

- There is currently no charge for diagnosis of problems of plants of an agricultural nature. No fee is required for crop samples or field shelterbelts. Garden and yard site samples require a \$10.00 plus GST fee.
- What to send – include a good representation of the symptoms of concern. A single plant may not be adequate to allow diagnosis or any required testing. Include a number of plants in the sample, unless the size of the plants is very large. There is no specific number of plants required however larger numbers of plants are usually needed when plants are very small. For seedlings, a minimum of sixteen plants is helpful to allow preparation of an adequate number of agar test plates should this be required. For small plants, send entire plants. Sending portions of plants only, such as symptomatic leaves, may not allow accurate diagnosis since symptoms in above ground plant parts may be related to root or vascular problems. When plants are very large, they may be cut into pieces to ease packaging, or it may be possible to send only portions displaying very specific symptoms such as roots and lower stems displaying well defined lesions.
- Carefully clean excess amounts of soil away from roots before packaging. For seedlings, separate them carefully from soil. Package plants in plastic bags to reduce wilting and drying of plants during transit to the lab. Do not include wet paper toweling inside the package since this can lead to development of mold during transit to the laboratory. Package in a manner that will minimize crushing of small or delicate samples.
- If shipping plants via courier or bus, avoid shipping immediately before a weekend since plants may deteriorate from extra time in transit over the weekend. If plants are collected late in the week, they may be held under refrigeration and shipped the following week.
- Provide as much information as possible with the sample. Tell us what the concern is, severity of symptoms, distribution of symptoms on the plants and in the field. Provide some crop and field history if possible (eg. chemicals, previous crops). If not much information is available, at a minimum indicate the specific concern and severity of the problem. What seems obvious to you may not be as evident to the diagnostician. Don't leave us guessing!
- For weed identifications, keep in mind that flowering specimens may be required. Identification of seedlings is not always possible. Plants in the mustard family will often require at least a few developed pods for accurate identification since most identification keys use pod characteristics of plants in this family.

- Sample submission forms are available from the Crops Branch or the Crop Diagnostic Centre but are not absolutely required for submitting samples.