Submitting Samples
10 Tips for Collecting a Good Sample

UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

IFAS
Department of Plant Pathology
Plant Diagnostic Center

Plant disease diagnosis depends upon the quality of the sample submitted and the information provided by the submitter. Please see the sample submission guide for more details on sample submission (http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/sr007).

1. Don't wait until it's too late:
Submit your sample before the problem becomes widespread, while the disease is still manageable.

2. Sample before you spray:
Take samples before applying pesticides.

3. No dead samples:
Your sample should be decling but still alive (green).

4. More, more, more:
Submit generous amounts of plant material with a range of symptoms.

5. Don't forget your roots:
Roots should be kept intact. Hand shake excess soil from root systems, leaving enough soil to keep roots moist.

6. Keep them separated:
Bag roots and soil with a tie at the main stem. Wrap dry foliage in newspaper before placing the entire plant in a loosely tied bag. Do not mix different samples in the same submission bag.

7. Attention to detail:
Complete the Plant Clinic Sample Submission form with all pertinent information. Include the name of plant, location, percent affected, symptoms of concern, distribution, soil type and drainage, and fertilizers and pesticides used recently. This information will expedite the diagnosis process.

8. Cool and fresh:
Refrigerate samples after collection until submission. Mail or deliver samples as soon as possible after collection. Mail samples early in the week because plants will rot if in transit over the weekend. Use overnight mail for emergency samples.

9. Handle with care:
Mail samples in crush proof boxes with packing material for protection.

10. Extension Services can help:
There is a UF/IFAS Extension office in every county in Florida. Extension Educators, along with the Electronic Data Information Source (EDIS) website of UF/IFAS Extension, can be a great resource.

Extension office: http://solutionsforyourlife.ufl.edu/map/
EDIS: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu

Rapid Turfgrass Diagnostic Service example samples below.
http://turf.ufl.edu/rapiddiag.shtml