

Submitting Soil Samples for Nematological Analysis – Collecting, Preparing and Shipping

Nematodes are not uniformly distributed in the soil. In most cases they occur in clusters or contiguous aggregations which may result in missing the target pests. Therefore sufficient sampling must be implemented to enhance nematode detection.

All samples collected for the Nematology Section should be placed in sealed plastic or Ziploc bags so that the soil will not dry out completely. Each sample should be approximately one pint, or about the size of one large grapefruit. A nematology sample submission slip should accompany the samples with all pertinent contact information including name, address, and valid email address, as well as any information regarding the problem. Final Nematology Diagnostic Reports will be mailed to the customers via email. In order to keep sample slips legible, it is important that **they are not placed** inside plastic bag.

Samples for **plant problems** should contain only roots from the target host. Roots from other hosts or weeds should be discarded because these unwanted roots complicate the interpretation of the nematological analysis and the diagnosis of the nematode disease. When necessary, roots should be traced to the trunk of the stem or trunk of the target plant to verify their identity.

Lawn samples

- Identify areas that look unhealthy and dying.
- Collect samples from the border between dead (dying) and live green grass.
- Collect **soil and roots** from the affected area and place in a Ziploc or plastic bag.
- Each sample taken should be roughly one pint or the size of a grapefruit.

Sampling small plants-up to 4 gallon pot

- Generally **one** sample from a suspect plant will suffice.
- Collect **soil and roots** from the affected plant and place in a Ziploc or plastic bag.
- If plants are small enough and there are some to spare, the entire plant may be sent.

Sampling large plants, greater than 4 gallons or planted trees

- Generally **two** samples from a suspect plant will suffice.
- Collect **soil and roots** from the affected plant and place in a Ziploc or plastic bag.
- Roots should be traced to the trunk of the stem or trunk of the target plant to verify their identity.

Please send samples to:

Florida Department of Agriculture / Division of Plant Industry
1911 SW 34th St.
P.O. Box 147100
Gainesville, FL 32614-7100
ATTN: Specimen Inside for Nematology Section