



Guidelines for Collecting and Submitting Plant Samples

For above-ground samples (foliage, flowers, fruit), surfaces of the material must be dry. Do not collect and send materials that are wet from rain, irrigation (allow them to first dry). If materials are damp, pack with a dry paper towel when putting them in the plastic bag.

For below-ground samples, roots and adhering soil can be moist but should not be overly wet. Use a shovel or trowel to dig up the roots (do not pull the plant out of the ground). Gently shake the root system to remove most of the soil (soil is not used in the tests).

As much as possible, collect and send the entire plant, since a complete analysis includes roots.

If possible, collect a sufficient number of plants so that the sample is representative of the situation. In general, the “more is better” rule applies. We suggest the following minimum numbers for samples: 12 to 15 symptomatic flowers, 10 to 12 symptomatic leaves, 10 to 12 symptomatic fruit, 4 to 5 entire mature plants (for plant collapse symptoms). For small seedlings a larger number (15 to 20) is highly recommended.

As much as possible, collect a representative series of plants showing how the problem is progressing: a healthy plant, and plants showing early, middle, and advanced symptoms.

Place the sample in a plastic bag that is large enough to contain the entire sample; tie up or otherwise seal the bag. When sending whole plants, it is helpful to first secure a bag around the roots and then place the entire specimen in a second bag; this helps keep the sample cleaner.

Label the bag (or attach labels) with your name and identifying information (location where sample was collected, ranch name, lot number, etc.). If samples come from different ranches or locations, put samples in separate bags since they should be tested separately.

Prior to hand-delivering or shipping, most bagged samples can be stored for a short time in a refrigerator. However, do not store samples at room temperature or in a freezer.

If delivering samples to our drop-off locations (Salinas or Watsonville) or lab (Highway 25), fill out a submission form and bring the sample. These locations are closed on weekends and holidays.

If shipping, place the bag in a box (do not use flat cardboard mailers; samples always get crushed in these). If the sample is particularly perishable, include ice packs in the shipping container. Include submission form and appropriate (CA state or federal) permit copy. Ship the sample to the Highway 25 lab address using overnight/next day delivery. Do not have boxes shipped out on a Friday (it will not be delivered until Monday, thereby compromising the sample).

For questions please contact our TriCal Diagnostics team:

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Addresses

Hand-delivered walk-in and drop-off samples can be left at the following locations:

TriCal Diagnostics (Lab site)

8770 Highway 25

Hollister, California 95023

For sample drop-off, open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.

Salinas drop-off location

Grower-Shipper Association (refrigerator in back of the mail/copy room)

512 Pajaro Street

Salinas, California 93902

For sample drop-off, open Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.

Watsonville drop-off location

Perry Laboratory

424 Airport Blvd.

Watsonville, California 95076

For sample drop-off, open Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. through 4:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays. Advisable to call ahead for open hours (831-722-7606).

For overnight/next day delivery and mailing:

TriCal Diagnostics

Attn: Steve Koike

8770 Highway 25

Hollister, CA 95023

Note: US Post does not ship to this address; one must use FedEx, UPS, or other carrier.