

## How to handle insect and plant specimens for identification

1. Fill out an [Insect and Disease Diagnosis Worksheet](#) for each specimen. Be **COMPLETE!** The accuracy of your diagnosis depends on the information you supply.
2. Pick and pack the specimen properly.

**Insects:** Collect 3-5 samples of the insect you would like identified. Place them in a container (a plastic Rx bottle works great) in the freezer overnight. This will kill the insects so they do not escape when we open them here. After they are dead, tape the container shut, and place it with packing filler and the completed [Worksheet](#) in a cardboard box (it **MUST** be in a **CRUSHPROOF BOX**).

**Plants: Disease issues?** Don't be afraid to collect a large sample; a small sample may not contain all the signs needed to make an accurate diagnosis. Send a representative sample, including both damaged and healthy tissue. Plant material that has been dead for some time is useless in determining the causal agent.

**Plant Identification** Include leaves, stems, roots, and flowering or seed bearing portions of the plant. Place green leaves between dry paper towels and enclose them in a plastic bag *without added moisture*. Carefully shake excess soil from roots. Place roots in a plastic bag with *moist* (not water-logged) wood shavings or torn paper towels to prevent material from drying out. Wrap fruits separately and *without added moisture*. Place your samples in a cardboard box (it **MUST** be in a **CRUSHPROOF BOX**), along with your [Worksheet](#).

3. To lessen the possibility of sample deterioration over the weekend, mail specimens **no later than** Wednesday morning.

### Mail samples to:

Vermont Master Gardener  
UVM Extension  
659 Spear Street  
Burlington, VT 05405-0107

► **WALK-IN HOURS: For seasonal hours, please call PRIOR to visiting** ◀

**800-639-2230 or locally @ 656-5421**

**Directions to Master Gardener Helpline Office:** Take I-89 to Exit 14W. This brings you onto Route 2 west (Williston Road). Take a right at the first light after the Sheraton Conference Center. Take an immediate left (around the U-turn) to a set of lights. Go straight through the lights. This brings you onto Spear Street. Go approximately 1 mile. Turn right at the UVM Bioresearch Facility sign. Bear left thru the parking lot. Building # 659 is the 2<sup>nd</sup> building on your left. If lost, please call 802-656-5421.

## WEED IDENTIFICATION

Due to the high volume of all types of plant and insect specimens submitted during the growing season; weed identification will only be made to the genus level. Control or eradication methods can be correctly determined, and will be provided to you, based on the specimen's genus.

# Insect and Disease Diagnosis Worksheet

*We are not trained in household and structural pest, please do not send!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(Day): \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Type of Problem:  Houseplant  Yard

*(If problem is not a houseplant or yard problem, skip to Question 15.)*

2. Host:  Tree  Vegetable  Annuals  Perennials  House Plant

Common name of host plant: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How long have you had the affected plant? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Plant parts affected:  Leaves  Stem  Roots  Entire Plant

Flowers  Trunk  Fruit  Unknown

5. Symptoms noticed:

LEAVES:  Yellowing  Holes in leaves  Leaf rotting or streaking

Leaf spots  Wilt  Abnormal growth or gall

Defoliation  Burning of margins  Leaf curled or puckered

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

BRANCHES/TRUNK:  Cracks in bark  Gummy discharge  White stuff on bark

Stunting  Abnormal growth on twigs or stem

Hole in trunk  Abnormal growth on trunk  Wilted branch tip

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Distribution of affected parts:

Top branches  Tip of branches  Scattered throughout

Bottom branches  All branches on one side  All over plant

PLEASE CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

