

Instructions for Submitting Insects for Identification

This form provides the necessary information for collection and preservation of insects. County Extension office will supply the materials for submission of samples. The manner in which insects are collected, preserved, and submitted ensure a proper identification in a timely and efficient way.

Materials for Submission of Samples Include: An Insect Identification Form with instructions, an addressed mailing tube, a vial, and a zip lock bag.

Submitting samples:

1. Fill out the form. Put as much information as possible on the form. **Write in pencil or with a permanent ink** that will resist smearing in case the form gets wet. This way there is some legible information that will enable us to notify you about your sample.
2. For each sample, enclose an \$8.00 check or money order made payable to **Entomology Insect Identification Laboratory**. Results will not be sent to you unless the fee is paid.
3. Within the zip lock bag, place the information sheet and payment. The zip lock bag will protect the paperwork from damage if the vial breaks or the alcohol leaks out of the vial.
4. Place your specimens in the vial and fill with an alcohol solution. The alcohol preserves the insect so it will not decay. **Screw the cap onto the vial tightly**. Many times the alcohol leaks out during shipment and the specimen is destroyed by the time it is received.
5. Put the zip lock bag and the insect specimen inside the mailing tube. Be sure that your name appears on the Insect Identification Form, the insect vial, and on the check or money order.
6. **Mail, ship, or deliver samples** to the laboratory as quickly as possible. The mailing address is printed on the mailing tube and on the Insect Identification Form. Inquiries about samples can be done through the office at 352-392-1901, Ext. 190, from 8:00 AM - 12:00 Noon and 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Services:

We will identify the specimen or notify the sender about its status within 14 days. The results and the appropriate recommendations will be written on the Insect Identification Form. A copy of the report will be sent to the name(s) which appear(s) on the Insect Identification Form. When necessary, the sample will be forwarded to a specialist. Depending upon the sample and where it will need to be routed, additional time for identification by the specialist may be required.

Collection:

There are some basic equipment and materials that are used for the collection of samples. Two types of nets are used to catch insects. A sweep or beating net, made of a heavy cloth bag, is used to beat or sweep foliage to collect insects and an aerial or butterfly net is used to catch flying or jumping insects such as flies, wasps, bees, butterflies, moths or grasshoppers. Small insects can be collected using a Q-tip or a camel's hair brush dipped in alcohol. It's a good idea to record facts about the specimens when collected so that this information can be forwarded on the Insect Identification Form along with the sample. Send more than one specimen of its kind in the vial, particularly if it is ants or termites or some other pest which can be obtained in high numbers in a single incidence. Don't jam-pack the insects into the vial. If the specimen is mutilated, find a better sample to send.

Preservation:

After the insects are collected, they must be quickly killed to avoid damage. Most insects can also be killed by placing them in the vial containing 70% alcohol (common rubbing alcohol). Beetles, true bugs, bees, wasps, and ants can be treated this way. Spiders and aquatic insects can be preserved in alcohol too. Most larvae, especially white grubs and caterpillars, should be killed in boiling water to prevent darkening of the tissues after they are placed in alcohol. Drop the living larva into the boiling water and let it remain until the water cools. After removing the specimen from the water, pat it with a paper towel to remove the excess water, and transfer the larva into alcohol.

Some insects like Asian cockroaches and moths can be identified best from dry specimens. Kill them by freezing. Carefully placing dead moths or butterflies within a layer of wax paper will protect the wings. Then put them in an envelope inside the mailing tube provided with the kit. Galls and damaged plant material can be carefully wrapped in soft tissue and submitted. **Do not apply scotch tape directly to a specimen or crush the insect and mail it in an envelope.**



Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences

Insect Identification Form

Send to: **Insect Identification Laboratory**
Entomology and Nematology Dept., Bldg. 970
University of Florida, P.O. Box 110620
Gainesville, FL 32611-0620

FEE: \$8.00 per sample

Collection Date: _____ County: _____ Agent: _____

Collector: _____ Phone: _____ Date Sent: _____

Mailing Address: _____

CLASSIFICATION OF SAMPLE (check all that apply)

Commercial _____ Residential _____ University _____ Public Property _____ Other _____
(please specify)

HOUSEHOLD:

- Structural**
- Bathroom
- Bedroom
- Kitchen / Pantry
- Family / Living room
- Garage
- Patio / Screened area
- Light
- Other: _____
- Stored Products**
- Kitchen / Pantry
- Other: _____

Type of Damage

- Annoyance
- Wood damage
- Fabric / Textile
- Food damage
- Biting / Stinging
- Other: _____

ANIMALS:

- Humans
- Livestock
- Poultry
- Pets
- Facilities
- Manure
- Other: _____
- Host: _____

Type of Problem

- Animal irritation
- Neighbor complaints
- Disease
- Wounds
- Other: _____

PLANTS:

- Field Crop
- Turf
- Vegetables
- Forest / Shade

Plant name: _____

% Infested: _____

Parts where insect located

- Buds
- Branches / Twigs
- Trunk
- Tuber
- Fruits or nuts
- Roots
- Seeds
- Bark
- Blossoms
- Leaves, upper
- Leaves, lower
- Bulbs / Corms
- Stem
- Growing tips
- Petioles

- Greenhouse
- Ornamentals
- Pasture
- Fruit

Symptoms

- Die back
- Discoloration
- Leaf drop
- Leaf spot
- Fruit spot
- Fruit rot
- Galls
- Gumming
- Malformation
- Slow decline
- Stunting
- Sudden collapse
- Tip burn
- Yellowing
- Fruit drop

COMMENTS: _____ Routine _____ Urgent (if urgent, explain why)

LAB # _____ Date Received _____ Date Completed _____

Date Identified _____ Sample Status: _____ Client _____ IFAS Service _____ Other _____

IDENTIFICATION _____

BY WHOM _____

RECOMMENDATION: