

## SUBMITTING SPECIMENS FOR IDENTIFICATION

The following procedures for the collection and shipment of specimens should be used for submitting samples to specialists:

### I. Specimen collection:

1. Adequate amount of material should be collected
2. Thorough information should be noted, including the following:
  - a) Location of collection
  - b) When collected
  - c) Who collected the specimen
  - d) Host description (species, age, condition, # of affected plants)
  - e) Description of area (e.g., old or young forest, bog, urban):
  - f) Unusual conditions (e.g., frost, poor soil drainage, misapplication of fertilizers or pesticides?).
3. Personal opinion of the cause of the problem is very helpful.

### II. Shipment of specimens:

1. General: Pack specimens in such a manner to protect against breakage. Hand deliver when possible.
2. Insects: If sent through the mail, pack so that they withstand rough treatment.
  - a. Larvae and other soft-bodied insects should be shipped in small screw-top vials or bottles containing at least 70% isopropyl (rubbing) alcohol. Make certain the bottles are sealed well. Include in each vial adequate information, or a code, relating the sample to the written description and information. Labels inserted in the vial should be written with pencil or India ink. Do not use a ballpoint pen, as the ink is not permanent.
  - b. Pupae and hard-bodied insects may be shipped either in alcohol or in small boxes. Specimens should be placed between layers of tissue paper in the shipping boxes. Pack carefully and make certain that there is very little movement of material within the box. **Do not pack insects in cotton.**
  - c.
3. Needle or foliage diseases: **Do not ship in plastic bags.** Sprinkle lightly with water before wrapping in newspaper. Pack carefully and make sure that there is very little movement of material within the box. Include the above collection information. Fore spruce and

other conifers, include a description of whether current-year's needles, last-year's needles, or old-needles are attacked.

4. Plant ID for Invasive Weeds: **Do not ship in plastic bags.** Press plant between newspaper. Include complete plant with roots, stem, leaves and flowers. Pack carefully to minimize movement of plant material.

5. Mushrooms and conks (bracket fungi): Do not ship in plastic bags. Either pack and ship immediately, or first air dry and then pack. To pack, wrap specimens in dry newspaper and pack into a shipping box with more newspaper. If on wood, include some of the decayed wood. Be sure to include all collection information.

6. FILL OUT SPECIMEN IDENTIFICATION REQUEST FORM & Deliver Specimen to your local Cooperative Extension Service Office.

### **III. Shipping:**

1. Ship as quickly as possible, especially if specimens are fresh and not air-dried. If samples cannot be shipped rapidly, then store in a refrigerator.
2. Include address inside shipping box.
3. Mark on outside: "Fragile: Insect-disease specimens enclosed. For scientific purposes only. No commercial value."