



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

National Forest
Genetics Laboratory
(NFGEL)

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GENERAL COLLECTION GUIDE FOR VEGETATIVE MATERIALS *SENDING MATERIAL UNDER COOL CONDITIONS*

(revised 6/2013)

IMPORTANT! Sample collectors are required to make contact with NFGEL staff **BEFORE** collections begin. Call (530) 622-1609 for orientation to collection procedures, Quality Assurance (QA) sampling, and equipment. Questions will gladly be answered. We want to help you make your project a success, and that means collections must be optimal!

COLLECTION AND PACKING:

Samples must be free from all visible disease and/or insect damage.

Samples should be placed in ziplock plastic bags large enough to prevent tissue from being folded, crushed, or damaged. If samples are very wet, pat with paper towels until tissue is just damp to prevent mold. Each sample should be well identified with labels in permanent ink. Write the identification on the outside of each ziplock bag, and also insert a matching label inside the bag. Place bags into an ice chest with frozen blue ice to keep samples cool in the field. Keep bags and ice chests out of the sun. Do not leave collection bags inside vehicles in summer heat. Include QA samples if required for your project, as determined by NFGEL staff.

Store bagged tissue in a refrigerator until shipping. Do not allow bags to touch the refrigerator walls as this often causes the samples to freeze. Ship samples in an ice chest with frozen blue ice packs to keep samples cold in transit. Please do not use wet ice or frozen bottles of water. Insulate samples from direct contact with blue ice using a thin layer of newspaper or other packing material. Use enough blue ice to keep samples cool. Hot summer months may require more blue ice for protection. Don't pack samples together so tightly that samples are crushed and bruised when they arrive; use another cooler if needed. If you ship in a Styrofoam ice chest (they are inexpensive), please place the ice chest in a cardboard box to prevent the cooler from breaking in transit.

SHIPPING:

Ship vegetative materials as soon as possible; within one day of collection is best. It is important to coordinate shipping of materials with NFGEL so that samples may be processed quickly upon arrival. **NEVER MAIL THE PACKAGE SO THAT IT ARRIVES AT THE LAB ON A FRIDAY OR THE DAY BEFORE A HOLIDAY.**

1. **SEND** by a quick and traceable delivery service. (Federal Express has the best delivery time for us, but UPS or U.S. Postal Overnight Service are fine). Send to:
USDA Forest Service - NFGEL
2480 Carson Road
Placerville, CA 95667
phone: 530-622-1609; fax: 530-622-2633
2. **MARK** on the outside of the package: "VEGETATIVE MATERIAL – REFRIGERATE IMMEDIATELY UPON ARRIVAL"
3. **ENCLOSE** a packing list in the shipment. E-mail an electronic copy of sample identification information to NFGEL at vhipkins@fs.fed.us. We will reply when materials are received.
4. **CALL** NFGEL at (530) 622-1609 when material is shipped.

