Ministry of Agriculture Plant Health Laboratory

How to Submit Blueberry Plants for Diagnosis

1. Ensure the sample is representative of the problem.
2. Do not send dead plants. Send a plant that is in the process of dying.
3. If you are not sure how to take a sample, call the laboratory for advice.

4. Specimens must be fresh. Field dug plants should be sent the same day they are dug. Include at least one cup of field soil from the root zone.
5. Dig up plants rather than pulling them from the ground to preserve the roots. If plants are potted, send the whole pot. Enclose base of the plant, or pots in a plastic bag that is secured at the plant crown to prevent roots from drying and contamination of leaves with soil.
6. Do not expose the sample to heat or freezing.
7. Fill out the laboratory submission form with as much detail as possible. The submission form can be found at: www.gov.bc.ca/planthealth
8. Package securely, enclose appropriate payment and bring to the address above.

THE LAB DOES NOT DO NUTRIENT OR CHEMICAL RESIDUE ANALYSIS IN SOIL OR TISSUE.

If the whole plant cannot be submitted, (e.g., large trees and shrubs) follow the instructions on the next page.

Blueberry Scorch Virus and Blueberry Shock Virus Testing

The BC Blueberry Council sponsors a testing service for Blueberry Scorch Virus and Blueberry Shock Virus that is conducted at the Plant Health Laboratory. This service runs from mid May to mid August and is free of charge. This is a separate program from the services provided by the Plant Health Laboratory and requires a separate form that is available at the office. Sampling instructions are on the back of the form.

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If the whole plant cannot be submitted, follow these instructions:

The whole plant does not need to be submitted when you suspect a specific problem and are looking for confirmation, however, a follow-up sample of other plant parts may be required.

**Fruit samples:**
Fruit samples can only be checked for fungi and insects. Fungi that affect fruit may be present on leaves and stems as well, therefore a whole plant may give a better evaluation of the problem.

**Leaf samples:**
Leaf samples can only be tested for viruses, bacteria, fungi, and insect damage. Symptoms may be an indication of what is happening in the stem or roots.

**Blossom Samples:**
Blossom samples can only be tested for viruses, bacteria, and fungi. Symptoms may be an indication of what is happening in buds, stems or roots.

**Branch samples:**
Branch samples can only be tested for fungi and bacteria if symptomatic tissue is submitted. Usually, the crown, roots and soil are also necessary for proper evaluation.

**Root and soil samples:**
Roots can be checked for root rotting organisms and insect damage. Soil can be tested for pH and EC readings. There can be a problem when the pH is different in the root ball than in the field soil, therefore, both should be included. Problems can be missed when the whole plant is not submitted. Note, the lab is no longer able to do nematode analysis and identification.

The BC Berries Production Guide, has up to date information on growing berries in British Columbia. The Guide can be found at http://productionguide.agrifoodbc.ca/guides/14.