

Sample Dispatch

Samples sent to Hill Labs **MUST** be accompanied by complete documentation recording the name and address of the client who is to be invoiced, a schedule of sample names and details of the analysis required.

Packaging, Dispatch & Notification

Packaging should be strong and robust and able to withstand handling in transit. Samples should be packaged to prevent them moving around inside the main package.

Samples should be preferably sent by **airmail**. Samples sent from overseas will have a fee added per consignment to cover New Zealand biosecurity requirements.

It is recommended that you advise us of dispatch by email: mpi@hill-labs.co.nz. This enables early discovery of any packages delayed in transit. Include any information you have such as airway bill numbers, date of posting etc.

Address and Customs Clearance:

- Address samples to:
Hill Labs – Sample Reception
221A Ellis Street
Hamilton 3204
NEW ZEALAND
- Pack relevant **Permit** in an envelope on the **OUTSIDE** of the parcel
- Attach a **Customs Declaration** to the outside of parcel giving details of the type of product and that it is “for chemical analysis”
- Attach the **MIPIPS label** to the outside of the package. This enables a **prioritised Biosecurity clearance**
- Ensure any Viable Samples are double bagged and then enclosed in a sealed plastic bag for MPI to inspect without opening.

Copy of the correct permit MUST come with samples. Permits can be found at www.hill-labs.co.nz > Client Resources > Import Permits

Agricultural and Horticultural Samples

Sample collection

We stress the importance of sending us a representative sample, selected according to the guidelines provided by your advisors. In the absence of specific advice on how to select samples, Hill Labs is able to help. It is important to use standard techniques, as proper interpretation of results depends upon the quality of sample sent.

While we indicate the amount of sample we require for analysis, this is always less than the amount you should initially collect. The amount collected must give you and your advisors the confidence that it is an average of the area as a whole. If necessary, after drying it may then be sub sampled in a careful and representative manner.

Sample preparation

The following guidelines ensure the samples do not deteriorate in transit and assist in reducing sample volume and freight costs.

Note that samples to be analysed for **pesticides** may need special treatment - please contact our laboratory for advice.

At all stages take care to avoid contamination of soil and plant samples. Plant tissue contaminated with soil leads to erroneous results and the presence of fertiliser as a contaminant creates serious problems in interpretation of analytical results.

Soil Samples

Soils should be dried prior to packaging. This may be achieved in the open air in a clean and dust free area, or in a forced air dryer at ambient temperature or at about 30 degrees Celsius. Place the soil in an aluminium tray or paper bag. Drying will typically take three or four days.

To minimise freight costs, the volume of the sample may be reduced in the following manner.

1. Spread the sample over a clean sheet of paper and break up particles by gentle crushing.
2. Thoroughly mix the sample and then divide into quarters. Discard two diagonally opposite quarters and combine the two remaining quarters and repeat the quartering until the desired amount of soil is left.

Place the sample in a plastic bag and clearly label the outside of the bag. About 200 grams of dry soil is required to complete the standard Basic test and a further 20 grams for each additional test.

Plant Samples

It is essential to dry plant tissue prior to submission; field fresh material deteriorates easily in transit. Dry in a clean dust free environment until leaves are crisp. If using a dryer set the thermostat at no more than 60 degrees Celsius.

Place the dried material in paper or plastic bags, seal and label the outside of the bag clearly. About 100 grams of dry material are required for the basic plant test and a further 10 grams for each additional test.

Environmental Samples

Many environmental samples require special storage and transport conditions, depending on the tests to be carried out. Some of the major tests are summarised below, please contact our laboratory staff to discuss anything not covered.

Soil Samples

Metals, nutrients, cyanide, other inorganic testing - These can generally be treated as for Agricultural Soils as described on the previous page. Minimum amount of sample is usually about 50-100 g, depending on the tests required.

Organics - hydrocarbons, PAH, pesticides - Samples should be collected into glass jars (jam jars are suitable), preferably with metal lids.

Samples should, ideally, be transported chilled, but this is sometimes not practical because of locations and air transport constraints. As a minimum, samples should be chilled after collection.

Samples for BTEX or VOC **MUST** be transported chilled to produce valid results.

Water Samples - Microbiological Tests

It is NOT usually appropriate to carry out microbiological tests on water samples from overseas, unless arrangements can be made for the samples to be delivered to a laboratory in NZ within 24 hours of the sample being taken. Samples **MUST** be transported chilled in a container supplied by the laboratory.

Samples known to contain microorganisms should be packaged in accordance with relevant IATA Packaging Instructions.

Water Samples – General chemical tests

These can usually be done on samples provided samples are chilled after collection and containers are filled to the top. Time delays and variable ambient temperatures may have an effect on results which may need careful interpretation because of this.

Metals - There is usually no problem with testing for metals. An exception is hexavalent chromium which needs to be analysed as soon as possible after sample collection.

Organics - Samples **MUST** be collected into glass containers and, preferably, transported chilled.

- Samples for BTEX or VOC **MUST** be transported chilled to produce valid results.