



OSU Extension offers help with plant identification

The [Oklahoma State University Extension](#) has long been known as a reliable resource for research-based information on anything from child nutrition and financial management to pasture management and herd health. Add to that, Extension can help homeowners identify plants with which they aren't familiar.

This can be especially helpful for those who may have moved into a new home with established gardens. It's helpful to know what's growing in order to know how to properly take care of all of the plants.

Homeowners, gardeners and plant lovers alike are welcome to provide a good-quality specimen and enough information about the plant to get an accurate identification. Poor-quality samples or inadequate information can lead to no identification or even misidentification. Samples can be submitted two ways – physical samples and/or photographic images.

Follow these steps to submit physical plant samples for identification:

1. Small plants – provide the entire flowering and fruiting plant.
2. Larger plants/trees/shrubs – provide a couple of stems/twigs with leaves that show the branching pattern, preferably with flowers/fruits.
3. Ensure the specimen isn't wilted. Collect just before submitting.
4. Flatten the sample by placing it between sheets of newspaper (except for fruit), then sandwich between two pieces of cardboard and tie it together. Don't tape the sample to the cardboard and don't put the specimen in a plastic bag.
5. If submitting more than one sample, number them for identification purposes.
6. Include the [Plant Identification Form](#) for each sample being submitted.
7. Photographs to supplement a physical sample can be helpful.
8. Please note plant specimens cannot be returned.
9. Mail the sample to: Plant Identification, 358 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK 74078.

Another option is to email photos of the plant needing identification. Good, clear images can provide quicker identification than submitting physical samples. Follow these tips for submitting good images:

1. Photograph the whole plant and site conditions. Show where the plant is growing, ie: in the landscape, in the woods, along the road, in a field, in full sun or shade, etc.
2. Include close-ups of the leaves, stems, buds, bark, fruit and flowers. Don't get too close as this may result in a blurry photo.
3. Provide scale – place a common object, such as a quarter or a ruler, next to the specimen to help determine size.

4. Submit only clear, in-focus photos. The higher the resolution, the better.
5. Email images, along with the [Plant Identification Form](#) to david.hillock@okstate.edu. Put "Plant ID" in the subject line.

Here's a great [video](#) that will walk you through all the steps for submitting samples either through the mail or via email with photographic images.

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