

Soil Testing and Plant Analysis Laboratory

Louisiana State University AgCenter

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Revision# 00	Effective Date: 8/21/2026
Title: STPAL Sample Submittal Checklist	

The checklist outlined below shall be used to review and accept samples submitted to the Soil Testing and Plant Analysis Laboratory (STPAL). If there is a discrepancy that is not addressed below, inform the laboratory coordinator or their designee before accepting and processing samples. Mail is in Sturgis Room 104. Check the mail at least two times a day and at minimum once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

- ☐ Samples must be accompanied by an appropriate sample test form (available in Sturgis RM 128 or on the internet at www.lsuagcenter.com/stpal). Do not accept samples without a submittal form, payment, or a payment method. If the customer has selected a payment type that requires a call or has not selected a payment type at all, call the customer. If the samples are from an internal source (LSU), an account must be provided.
 - a. Some sample bags or boxes will contain the sample paperwork. Always check the closed sample container for any paperwork you believe is missing before contacting the customer.
- ☐ Inspect the samples for damage. Make a note of any damaged samples on the submittal form and contact the customer. Inform the customer of the damage and to what extent the damage will affect their sample integrity. If the customer decides to move forward with analysis, make a note on the submittal form. Contact should be made via email; however, it can be done in person or over the phone if a follow-up email is sent as well.
- ☐ Ensure the samples match the paperwork. You can perform the damage assessment at the same time you are verifying the samples against the sample paperwork provided by the customer. If the samples do not match and the customer is present, have the customer correct the errors. Depending on the number of samples, the customer may need to leave to do this. If the samples were received via mail, contact the customer. **Do not process samples with discrepancies.**
- ☐ For research samples, stamp the “received” date on the sample test form and initial. The samples can then be placed on a cart or moved to the appropriate holding location to await sample login.
- ☐ Samples in non-paper containers that require drying must be transferred to paper-based containers for the drying process. Open all bags and boxes to ensure samples have not been placed in plastic bags before being placed into STPAL sample bags or boxes.
 - a. The sample may need to be composited during this step if provided in large containers or bags. To do this, ensure you are wearing PPEs, empty the sample into a clean collection vessel, hand mix until homogenous, and collect approximately one pint of material to be moved to a drying bag.
 - b. Samples that are too wet to be placed into paper containment should be pre-dried first. Do this by placing the sample in the drying oven along with a copy of the paperwork. Ensure the sample is open so that the oven can dry the contents. Check back each day until sample is dry, then process as normal.
- ☐ Align samples in batches of no more than 30 (including the check sample) on each cart for soil analysis. Other samples may not need to be placed on a sample cart for drying. Discuss any questions with the lab coordinator or their designee before moving forward.
- ☐ Provide batch sample paperwork to the sample login lab technician when the cart is complete.