

SOIL, PLANT, AND WATER LABORATORY
Agricultural and Environmental Services Lab
University of Georgia
Athens, GA 30605

Handling of Soil, Plant, and Water Samples from Foreign Sources

The importation and handling of samples from other countries require special attention in the laboratory per specifications by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The following guidelines must be followed to comply with the USDA requirements:

1. **Shipping containers**: Upon receipt, all sample containers must be marked and identified. These containers must be disposed of by burning or other approved methods.
2. **Sample Materials**: All unused samples (unless the client wants them sent back) as well as screenings from filtration and solids remaining in pH cups must be disposed of in the following manners:

Dry Heat:	<u>Temperature (oF)</u>	<u>Exposed Period</u>
	230-249	16 hrs
	250-309	2 hrs
	310-379	30 mins
	380-429	4 mins
	430-450	2 mins

3. **Rinse Water**: Whenever water is utilized in processing a sample, including initial rinse water of contaminated equipment, the *used water shall be boiled for one minute* before disposal.

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Sample containers

A. pH

Soil Slurries: after measuring pH, dispose soil slurries into foreign soil waste container for incineration.

pH Cups:

1. Rinse used pH cups and dispose rinsates into foreign waste container.
2. Rinse cups with 1:1 chlorox or bleach.
3. Dispose cups in regular trash can.

B. Mineral Extraction (Mehlich Solution)

Soil Slurries: Empty slurries into foreign soil waste container.

Extraction Bottles:

1. Rinse twice with tap water and place rinsates into waste container.
2. Rinse bottles with 1:1 chlorox or bleach solution.
3. Dispose rinsates into regular liquid disposal system.
4. Wash extraction bottle with deionized water, dry, and reuse.