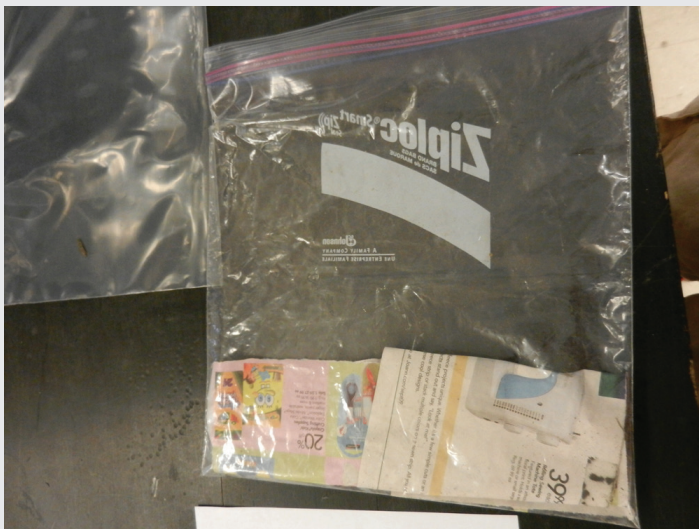


Diagnostic Tip - Extending the Working Life of Diagnostic Samples

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Storing plant samples in the lab during the diagnostic process is a necessary part of clinic operations. We sometimes need to keep samples for several days to accommodate specialists' schedules or while cultures are incubating. Detached plant parts, like leaves, fruits or herbaceous plants without roots, can deteriorate during that time, even in refrigerated storage. We have found that wrapping plant samples in

dry newspaper, then placing the package in a self-closing plastic bag (or plastic bag with rubber band) before storing in a refrigerator keeps samples in better condition than storing in plastic bags alone. The newspaper absorbs condensation that builds up in sealed plastic bags, keeping the plant sample dry and reducing secondary molds. It's a great use for all of those free campus newspapers! 🌱



Unwrapped sample (top) and sample wrapped in newspaper (bottom). Photos courtesy of Karen Rane, University of Maryland.