Plant Tissue Sampling for Blackberry & Raspberry

**When to sample:** *Diagnostic* (troubleshooting) samples can be collected any time during the growing season as long as some primocanes are present. Collect a “good” (healthy) and a “bad” (unhealthy) sample. *Predictive* samples evaluate nutritional needs for next year’s crop and should be collected from primocanes post-harvest and before topping.

**How:** Collect leaves from primocanes; 1–2 leaves per bush from 20–40 bushes; 20-40 leaves total

**Plant part:** Collect Most Recent Mature Leaves (MRML) from primocanes. MRMLs are neither young and shiny nor old and dull. About the 5th leaf down from the tip.

**Tips**
- Fill out the Plant Sample Information Form as completely as possible. The more information you provide, the more precise your recommendations will be.
- Specify the *growth stage* and whether your sample is *Predictive* (routine) or *Diagnostic* (troubleshooting). For diagnostic testing, submit a plant sample and a corresponding soil sample from both a “good” (healthy) and “bad” (unhealthy) area.
- Use paper bags for storing and mailing. Don’t put your leaves in a plastic bag. They will rot.

**Standard analysis includes:** nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, iron, manganese, zinc, copper, and boron.

**Fees:** $5 per sample for N.C. growers ($25 for out-of-state; $12 for N.C. researchers).

**Turnaround time:** 2 days from receipt.

**Send samples to:** NCDA&CS Agronomic Services—Plant Lab  
*Mailing address:*
1040 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699  
*Physical address:*
4300 Reedy Creek Rd, Raleigh NC 27607  
Phone: (919) 733-2655

For more detailed information, go to the Plant Tissue Analysis page at www.ncagr.gov/agronomi or contact the regional agronomist for your area.