

# Collection, Transport, and Release of BioAgents

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Proceed with these steps in a timely manner. They are stressful to the BioAgent and may reduce it's capacity to survive once released. Adults may be laying eggs when they are collected. Eggs laid in a container are doomed.

## COLLECTION

An excellent use of the sweep net is to bend the plant over the net and shake the insects off. Twist the net to keep insects from escaping while you walk back to your staging area. Gently turn the sweep net inside out to transfer your insects into a high sided plastic dish pan. Start bumping the dishpan to keep the insects off balance (so not many fly away) and clean away the bigger debris collected with them. You can then "pour" your insects into a paper lunch sack for transport to the new site.

When close to your staging area use the high sided plastic dish pan directly. Start by placing a few plant stems in the dishpan. As you shake the insects off into the dishpan they will tend to cling to the stems and not fly off. Gently bump the dishpan to keep the loose insects in place.

Another "small scale" way to collect is the funnel assembly shown in the photo. Use a plastic 2 liter bottle to make the funnel. The funnel fits snugly into a 1 liter big mouth bottle. Make a stopper from tin foil. Place the funnel under the insect, and make it drop into the funnel.

Other handy tools are gloves, hand pruner, and aspirator.

## TRANSPORT

A paper lunch sack works well for same day, or next day releases. Fold the top over three times and staple it. You can make a reusable transport container from a wide mouth canning jar, some plastic screening, and some tub and tile caulk, like the one in the photo. Completely clean the container parts. Containers must NOT be air tight. 500 small insects per quart jar or paper lunch sack is OK.

Soon after you collect your insects put them in a container. If they will be there for more than a few hours put the container in a cooler with a couple of blue ice packs, or a 2 liter pop bottle with frozen water. Never expose a container full of insects to the open sun. The temperature can soar, and kill them. Place a rinsed  $\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " moist cube of sponge or paper towel piece, and some of the agents natural food in the container. Include plant stems for the insects to climb and cling too.

Inside the cooler the containers should not be in direct contact with ice. Releasing the agents on the same day of capture is best, although they can survive at least for a few days if they are kept cool. Do not freeze them.

## RELEASE

Release agents onto the same weed, and into the same type environment they were found in. This will usually be a sunny open area. Sites that will be free of disturbance over the years are best.

