

## Detailed Shipping Notes for International Samples

Here are some common notes. It is highly recommended to consult the shipping company and relevant departments in your school/country for formal regulations and requirements.

A colleague who has sent frozen samples with dry ice to USA is also helpful.

Ask Daliang Ning ([ningdaliang@ou.edu](mailto:ningdaliang@ou.edu)) for highlighted files in following text.

- **Export license and some certification**

- Many countries take items including viruses, bacterium, toxins etc. very seriously. Please check whether you need to apply for an export permit before preparing to ship samples. Usually, sludge pellet samples need export license, while DNA samples do not.
- Some countries or regions may ask for certification or agreement to meet the law of toxic or hazardous substance control. You may check it with relevant departments.

- **Import Permit for sludge pellet samples or formal letter for DNA samples**

- For **sludge** pellet samples:

The USDA has strict regulations regarding transporting soils/sludge into the US from foreign countries. I will send you the import permits once you need. Both of these (“Permit to receive soil” and “Soil sample label”) should be attached to the outside of the shipping container.

- For **DNA** samples:

You need **a letter** on your institution’s letterhead with the following or similar text:  
“

*To Whom It May Concern:*

*The enclosed samples are purified nucleic acid (DNA) samples and are for research purposes only. They are non-toxic, non-pathogenic, and non-infectious.*

*They belong to the category of Microbially Produced Materials (USDA category number 1110) for which no import permit is required.*

*They will be analyzed for DNA sequence composition for a research project in the University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK, USA.*

”

This letter should be included with any customs or export paperwork that needs to be included.

You also need a **Toxic Substance Control Act Certification** (TSCA). When you are ready to ship, please ask Daliang ([ningdaliang@ou.edu](mailto:ningdaliang@ou.edu)) or Joy ([joy.vannostrand@ou.edu](mailto:joy.vannostrand@ou.edu)) for a signed Toxic Substance Control Act Certification. You need to put the date and the tracking number into the form

- **Commercial Invoice**

- In most cases, you must state declared value for customs with the appropriate country currency, even if your shipment contains only samples or research materials and it is not for resale. Ask an experienced people or the shipping company for the source of applicable commercial invoice. We will provide an example “commercial invoice”.
- You are usually required to submit three signed commercial invoices.
- **Labels on the package (provided)**
  - “Dry Ice Label” is required if you use dry ice. (FedEx may provide)  
Minimum dimensions: 100 x 100mm, Symbol (Seven vertical stripes in upper half): Black, Background: White.  
Following markings around the “Dry Ice Label” are required:
    - The net quantity of dry ice, in kilograms.
    - Name and address of both the sender and recipient.
  - “Freeze upon arrival” and “upward” labels are recommended.
- **FedEx Air Waybill (reference provided)**
  - We will provide an example of “Air Waybill”. Dry ice information is required.
  - Choose 2-day shipping option.
- **Additional notes for packing with dry ice**

\*\*\* **Sludge samples must be packed with dry ice. If it is really difficult to use dry ice, you should send DNA samples with enough ice packs in the Styrofoam cooler. In this case, please check that all files have nothing about dry ice and do not use the dry ice label.**

  - Dry ice releases carbon dioxide gas which can build up enough pressure to rupture the packaging. You must ensure the packaging you use allows the release of this pressure to prevent rupturing the package.  
*For example; do not use steel drums or jerricans as outer packaging, and do not place dry ice within sealed plastic bags.*
  - A Styrofoam cooler within a carton box works well as insulation. Ensure the Styrofoam IS NOT sealed to be airtight.
  - The samples should be in leak-proof containers, e.g. tubes sealed by Parafilm or in sealed bags. DO NOT freeze dry or thaw the DNA samples. TE buffer, dry ice and/or ice packs can protect DNA when shipping.
  - Pack the frozen samples into the Styrofoam box, surround the samples by ice packs and put most dry ice (if applicable) or one ice pack on the top of the samples. Fill any empty space with wadded newspaper. It may need 7~9 pound dry ice for one package. Please ask the dry ice seller for suggestion about 2-day shipping.
  - Make sure the outside of the shipping container and the sample containers are clean and free of sludge or soil.

- **Pasting on the outside of package**

- Please check following files/labels are pasted on the **outside** of the package:  
Export license and/or certification, import permit for sludge pellets or formal letter and TSCA for DNA samples, commercial invoice, dry ice label with markings (if use dry ice), Air Waybill and freeze upon arrival label.

*If you use a shipping company to ship the soils, please make sure they know the permits need to be on the outside of the package. We have had packages returned to the sender because the permit was on the inside of the box instead of the outside.*

It is very important to follow these instructions and regulations in your country. If your shipment is stopped at customs, the USDA can deny entry to any packages and the samples will be returned to you.

The package should be shipped directly to Joy at this address:

Joy D. Van Nostrand

Institute for Environmental Genomics, University of Oklahoma

101 David L Boren Blvd, SRTC 2030

Norman, OK 73019

Phone: +1-405-3254403