

# The Doctor Is In

## Plant Diagnostic Clinic reopens on MU campus

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*Written by Story: Linda Geist · Photography by Linda Geist · May 5, 2014*

The University of Missouri's Plant Diagnostic Clinic has reopened with a Missouri native at its helm. It had been closed for two years.

Extension associate and plant pathologist [Patricia Wallace](http://plantsci.missouri.edu/faculty/wallace.cfm) (<http://plantsci.missouri.edu/faculty/wallace.cfm>) offers answers about plant pests for homeowners, farmers, gardeners and businesses across the state. MU Extension specialists in county offices frequently send in samples from residents in their region.

Since the clinic reopened April 1, there's never been a lack of variety of sick plants, Wallace said. Samples have ranged from field, greenhouse or high tunnel crops to ornamental shrubs and trees.

Besides addressing plant diseases, the clinic can identify weeds, mushrooms, insects and arachnids with research-based results and an integrated pest management philosophy. Plant Sciences faculty specializing in agronomy, entomology, horticulture, weed science and plant pathology support the clinic, which opened in 1965. It is the only public plant pathology laboratory in Missouri.

Clinic results are logged into the National Plant Diagnostic Network's National Repository, a system that helps track the occurrence and spread of plant pests.

As a child, Wallace spent a lot of time at her grandparents' farm near Ava, Mo., so she understands the importance of plants and the part they play in Missouri's economy. She became interested in both botany and microbiology in college at Drury University in Springfield. She received her master's degree in plant pathology at Oregon State University and then worked for a California strawberry breeding company before returning to Missouri with her family.

The clinic is part of the [Division of Plant Sciences](http://plantsci.missouri.edu/) (<http://plantsci.missouri.edu/>) in the College of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources, which also operates a soil testing lab and plant nematology lab on the MU campus.

For more information about the clinic, go to [plantclinic.missouri.edu](http://plantclinic.missouri.edu/) (<http://plantclinic.missouri.edu/>) or email [plantclinic@missouri.edu](mailto:plantclinic@missouri.edu) (<mailto:plantclinic@missouri.edu>).

Samples can be mailed to or dropped off at University of Missouri Plant Diagnostic Clinic, 28 Mumford Hall, Columbia, Mo. 65201. Drop-off hours are 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday, or by appointment.



Patti Wallace examines a wheat sample at the MU Plant Diagnostic Clinic. The public clinic recently reopened on the MU campus.

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