

Services and Resources for Researchers

UConn Botanical Conservatory, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

The research facility of the Conservatory provides state-of-the-art research infrastructure for studies of ecology, evolution, biodiversity and climate change. This document describes the services and resources that will be provided to university researchers using the EEB research greenhouses to grow their plants.

Standard requirements

- Anyone working in the research greenhouses must, by law, must complete pesticide Worker Protection Standard (WPS) training provided by the General Manager.
- Anyone working in the research greenhouses must obey any signage prohibiting access to areas where pesticides have been applied.
- All new plant material must be inspected by Conservatory staff prior to entering the greenhouses.
- No user is permitted to apply pesticides to their plants.
- Experiments involving the use of radioactive or hazardous substances are not allowed under any circumstance.

Growth rooms

The Conservatory holds 10 research rooms, each providing 312 SF of benchtop space, which are allocated to researchers on a SF basis. The following environmental conditions can be adjusted:

- Water
- Shade
- Ventilation
- Limited humidification (if necessary)
- Supplemental lighting available

Please discuss the environmental requirements for optimal growth of your research crop with the greenhouse manager.

Evaporative cooling, air-conditioning or carbon dioxide fertilization can currently not be accommodated in the research greenhouses.

Watering and fertilizing

Researcher responsibilities

- Apply specialized or measured watering regimes.,
- Set up, with guidance of staff, custom irrigation regimes.
- Apply specialized nutrient solutions.
- Apply other experimental treatments, such as shade cloth, enclosures, etc.

Staff responsibilities

- Water plants (Conservatory staff are on-site seven days a week / 365 days a year).
- Apply liquid fertilizer (NPK 20-10-20) weekly or as needed.

Pest control

Researcher responsibilities

- Bring pest concerns to the attention of Conservatory staff.

Staff responsibilities

- Integrate pest management strategies to keep populations of harmful insects, mites and disease organisms under control and below levels that are acceptable to researchers.
 - Staff scouting for pests
 - Application of cultural, biological or chemical control agents as necessary

Potting supplies

Researcher responsibilities

- Acquire specific or unusual pots.
- Acquire soil mixes and other supplies not stocked by the Conservatory.
- Researchers working on especially large projects that consume excessive amounts of potting materials may be requested to reimburse the CONSERVATORY for supplies.

Staff responsibilities

- Provide several general purpose soil mixes (e.g. succulent mix, Promix BX (all purpose), Lambert LM1 (germination) and acquire specialty mixes based on 2 weeks lead time.
- Provide standard pots, trays, tray liners, stakes, labels, and other horticultural supplies (pruners, gloves, pencils).
- Wash and sanitize some pots and trays for reuse.

Sanitation/housekeeping

Headhouse provides

- Brooms, dustpans, pruning shears, cleaning supplies and various tools.

Researcher responsibilities

- Groom plants regularly (yellow leafing, pruning, etc.).
- Maintain proper spacing between plants for airflow to minimize pests.
- Maintain clean, and orderly growing environment in the greenhouses.
- Promptly discard all plant material no longer needed.

- Dispose and process any transgenic material as required by Environmental Health and Safety.
- Do not store any Conservatory supplies in growing rooms.
- Do not store any personal supplies and tools in the growing rooms (limited storage space may be available by request in the headhouse, at the discretion of the greenhouse manager).

Staff responsibilities

- Maintain a basic level of sanitation in the greenhouses, as needed for safety, pest control and general cleanliness, including:
 - Cleaning and sanitizing floors and benches.
 - Removing weeds.
 - Pruning and tidying plant material as requested by researcher.
 - Disposing of compost and trash.
 - Cleaning and maintaining the potting area.