

Making "White Traps"

A white trap is used to monitor insect specimens for infection by biocontrol nematodes. It consists of a petri dish filled approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ with non-chlorinated water and a plaster disk placed indentation side up into the center of the dish and partly submerged in the water. The trap is covered with a petri dish lid. Dead insect specimens are placed on the plaster disk and monitored daily for the emergence of nematodes.

Materials:

- 4oz portion cups
- Plastic spoon
- Plaster of paris
- Container for mixing plaster
- Water
- Ruler



Materials list

Protocol:

1. Mark portion cup at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch from the bottom to indicate how much to fill with plaster mixture (figure 1).
2. Mix plaster of paris and tap water in a container at 3:2 ratio. You are looking for a pancake batter consistency, smooth but not runny. Stir until you've reached desired consistency.
3. Working quickly, pour a thin layer of the mixture into the bottom of the portion cup, no higher than the $\frac{1}{4}$ inch mark. Gently tap the cup on the table to ensure that there are no bubbles in the plaster mixture.
4. Once poured, let plaster set until hardened.
5. Once hardened, the plaster disks can be removed by gently pushing on the bottom of the cup.
6. The disks are now ready to be used for the white trap and can be stored in a Ziploc bag.



Portion cup marked at $\frac{1}{4}$ inch with plaster mixture poured in.