

HOW TO TAKE A SOIL SAMPLE

WHERE TO START?

1. When should soil be sampled?

Soil samples can be taken at any time during the year. However, avoid extremely wet soil conditions unless absolutely necessary.

2. How often should I have my soil tested?

For most crops, every 2 to 3 years. Soil under intensive cultivation may require annual testing. Sampling from any given area should be done at about the same time as in previous years.

3. What is the proper sampling depth?

For cultivated crops and gardens:

sample at 0 - 1" and another at 1 - 6" depth.

For lawns and pastures:

a sample from the upper 6" is satisfactory; remove plant residue.

For tree and fruit crops:

2 samples should be submitted, one taken at 0 - 8" depth, the other at 8 - 16" (subsoil layer).

4. How many sub-samples should I collect from each area?

Repeat the sampling process in about 10 - 15 locations throughout the garden or field. Mix the sub-samples in a plastic bucket to obtain a representative composite sample. Avoid sampling in unusual areas if the objective is to estimate average fertility levels over the entire area.

5. What if I have an area of poor crop growth?

If you have a trouble spot, a separate sample taken from this area may be necessary.

6. Should the sample be dry?

Do not bring in wet samples. If it is necessary to sample wet soil, spread the sample on a sheet of newspaper and allow it to dry at room temperature.

7. How much soil is needed for each composite sample?

About **two cups** are required.

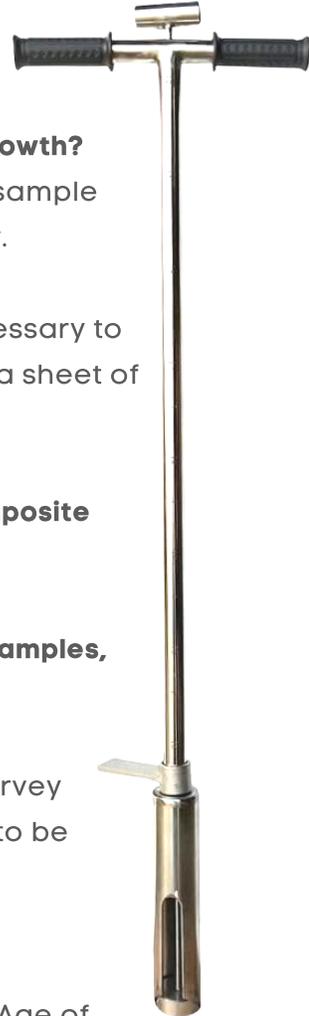
8. What information to accompany the samples, not required but helpful.

For cultivated crops:

Soil name and map symbol from soil survey
Tillage depth, Past crops, Future crops to be grown, Cover crops, Manure rates, if applied.

For gardens, lawns, trees:

Site characteristics, Crop to be grown, Age of, crop, Fertilizer used, Manure rates applied.



WHAT YOU NEED

- SOIL PROBE
- CLEAN BUCKET
- CLEAN TROWEL/SPOON
- GALLON ZIP LOCK BAG



WHAT TO DO



STEP 1

Push the drill down directly, or if necessary push down while turning it clockwise.

STEP 2

Continue pushing until the soil lift rod is finished rising.

STEP 3

Gently lift drill out of soil.

STEP 4

Add Sample to clean bucket, and mix well with clean tool to all other samples.

STEP 5- Add two cups of well mixed soil to clean ziplock bag, and bring to soil testing center.

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