

How to Collect a Soil Sample

Soil test information is just as good as the sample collected. Soil nutrients vary with soil type, location, slope and past management. Follow the procedure below for a representative soil sample.

- a. Obtain the correct tool for soil sampling. The best tool is a soil probe or auger. A clean plastic bucket is also needed to hold soil cores and mixing before putting in sample bags.
- b. Each sample submitted for analysis should be representative of the conditions which exist in a particular area.
- c. Avoid taking sample from unusual areas such as areas close to trees, manure piles, or drainage ditches.
- d. Make up a composite sample from the sample area. Take 15 to 20 cores from the area sampled. Probe at a 6 inch depth whenever possible.
- e. Take 15 to 20 probes of soil core in a random pattern within the sample area.
- f. Mix the cores in the bucket by hand. Take this composition and fill sample bags.
- g. Record information regarding the sample. Include location, date of sampling and test requested.

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