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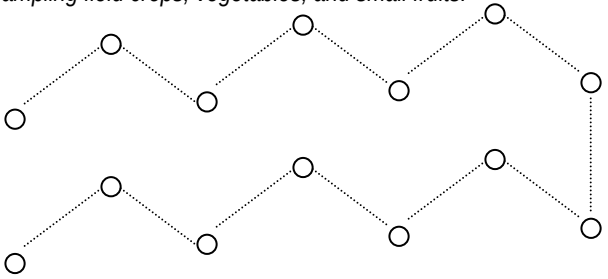
Soil Sampling Instructions - Field crops, Commercial Vegetables, and Fruits

NOTE! An accurate soil analysis and good recommendations depend on the soil sample being an accurate representation of the field. Please read and follow these instructions carefully!

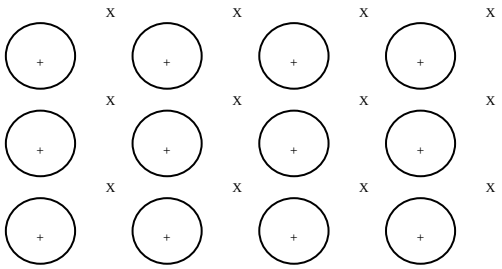
Sampling scheme

1. Areas that are different in appearance, slope, drainage, soil type, or past cropping should be sampled and tested separately.
2. Also sample separately areas that have received different lime and/or fertilizer treatments. Avoid taking the sample from the fertilizer band when sampling areas in row crops.
3. To obtain a representative sample, plan to collect 12 - 16 subsamples within the field. The subsamples will be combined and mixed to create one representative sample. See diagrams below. Note that fruit orchards require two samples (represented by XA and XB in the diagram) for each field. One sample should be a composite of 12 - 16 subsamples taken under the trees (+), and the other sample should be a composite of 12 -16 subsamples taken between trees (x).
4. Each sample must be submitted in a separate soil test kit with the appropriate soil test questionnaire.

For sampling field crops, vegetables, and small fruits:



For sampling tree fruit areas:



Sampling procedure

5. The soil is easier to sample when its moisture condition is suitable for plowing.
6. Use a trowel, spade, auger, or soil tube to obtain thin vertical slices or cores of soil from the surface to a depth of 6 - 8". If using a trowel or spade, insert the blade into the soil to a depth of 6 - 7"; remove soil and throw it aside. Reinsert the blade to take a thin (½") slice of soil, and lift the slice from the ground. Using a knife, cut from the center of this slice a 1" wide core from top to bottom. Place the core (subsample) in a clean bucket or other container.
7. Repeat this procedure at 11 - 15 locations within the sampling area, placing the subsamples together in the container.
8. If the soil is very wet when samples are taken, the soil should be laid out on clean paper to air-dry (do not heat to dry).
9. Mix the subsamples of a sampling area together in the container. The goal is to provide a representative sample.
10. Place ½ - 1 pint of the soil in the plastic bag provided. Seal the plastic bag with a rubber band or twist tie, and place the sample in the cloth mailing bag. The excess soil can be returned to the field.
11. Repeat for any separate areas that you wish to have tested. Do not place more than one sample in a sample bag.

Submitting the sample

12. Fill out the soil test questionnaire included with the kit as completely as possible. Place the completed questionnaire in the envelope attached to the mailing bag, making sure that the serial number on the sheet matches the serial number on the mailing bag, and follow mailing instructions on the envelope (or use the delivery service address given above, upper right).

Revised 04/06