

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
Soil Testing Laboratory

LAWN, GARDEN AND LANDSCAPE  
SOIL ANALYSIS REQUEST SHEET

Report No. \_\_\_\_\_

Send this information sheet with **ONE (1)** soil sample

**MAIL SOIL TEST REPORT TO:** \_\_\_\_\_ **OPTIONAL REFERENCE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Soil Location: County \_\_\_\_\_

Check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

<p>Please provide a name for this sample, consisting of no more than 4 numbers and/or letters. Indicate this name on the sample container and record it here.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>The report you receive will use this name to identify your sample.</p>	<p><b>Fertilizer Recommendations Requested for: (check <u>only</u> one)</b></p> <table> <tr> <td> <p><b>Lawn</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (101) Before seeding or sodding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (102) Existing lawn</p> <p><b>Gardens</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (110) Vegetable Garden</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (111) Flower Garden</p> </td> <td> <p><b>Fruit</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (112) Tree Fruits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (113) Small Fruits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (114) Blueberries</p> <p><b>Tree and Shrubs</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (115) Broadleaf</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (116) Evergreen</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (117) Azalea &amp; Rhododendron</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Lawn</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (101) Before seeding or sodding</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (102) Existing lawn</p> <p><b>Gardens</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (110) Vegetable Garden</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (111) Flower Garden</p>	<p><b>Fruit</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (112) Tree Fruits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (113) Small Fruits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (114) Blueberries</p> <p><b>Tree and Shrubs</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (115) Broadleaf</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (116) Evergreen</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> (117) Azalea &amp; Rhododendron</p>	<p><b>For Grass Only</b></p> <p>Is grass watered regularly?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Are clippings removed?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>	<p><b>Check Tests Requested</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Regular Test</b>, \$17.00 - includes total organic matter, phosphorus, potassium, pH - lime requirement, and estimated texture</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Soluble salts</b>, \$7 - testing for excessive salts</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Lead test</b>, \$16 - (separate sample required) <small>*See back for additional instructions</small></p> <p>*Additional tests, primarily of interest to land care professionals</p> <table> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Sulfur \$7</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Calcium/Magnesium \$7</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Nitrate \$8</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Iron, Zinc, Copper, and Manganese \$12</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Boron \$7</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>Be advised - The Soil Testing Laboratory does not provide interpretation for trace element tests.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Sulfur \$7	<input type="checkbox"/> Calcium/Magnesium \$7	<input type="checkbox"/> Nitrate \$8	<input type="checkbox"/> Iron, Zinc, Copper, and Manganese \$12	<input type="checkbox"/> Boron \$7	
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Tests provided by the University of Minnesota Soil Testing Laboratory are intended to aid in evaluating the fertility status and chemical condition of your soil. Based on these test results and the type of plants to be grown, you will receive fertilizer recommendations calculated to provide adequate levels of phosphorus and potassium for healthy plant growth, without adversely affecting the environment.

Problems with plants may be caused by factors other than soil fertility, e.g., disease, insects, insufficient light, soil moisture or compaction, or climatic conditions. An evaluation of soil fertility and pH is an important *first step* in diagnosing problems. If soil fertility is not found to be a problem, the other factors affecting plant growth should be evaluated to determine possible causes. Your County Extension Educator or Master Gardener can help if you need more information to diagnose your problem.

Because nitrogen is extremely mobile in soils, nitrogen recommendations are based on plant requirements and soil organic matter levels as determined by the laboratory.

\*Trace element tests are generally not recommended for lawn and garden samples. Research has shown that most soils in Minnesota contain adequate levels for plant growth. Trace element tests may be useful to some lawn care professionals dealing with special problems.

## HOW TO TAKE A SOIL SAMPLE

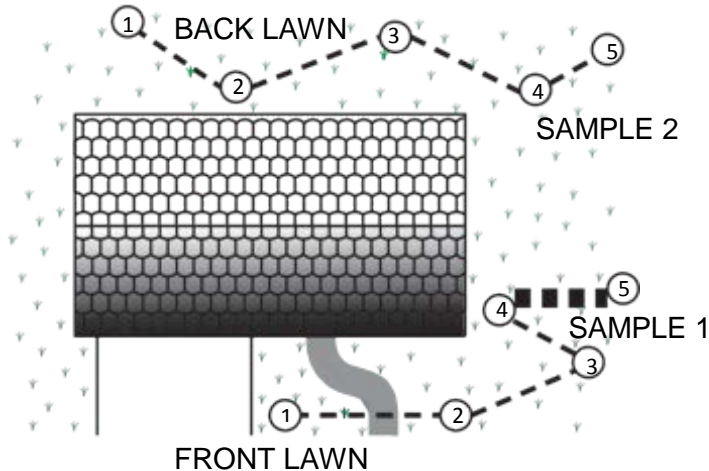
The quality of your results depends largely on the quality of your sample. To obtain a good soil sample, follow the directions below.

### WHEN

Soil samples may be collected whenever soil conditions permit. When submitting your samples to the laboratory, check our website ([soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/](http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/)) for current turnaround times and more information.

### WHERE

- If the area is fairly level and the soil appears to be uniform, collect one composite (mixed) sample.
- If your lawn or garden has large areas which differ in fertility, take one sample from each area. For example, you may want to sample the front lawn and the back lawn separately (see diagram).



- Area of special concern (under trees, near buildings, trouble spots) should be represented by separate samples.
- Please check the map on our homepage for soils outside Midwest USA.

### HOW

Use a garden trowel, spade, sampling tube or soil auger. **Scrape away or discard any surface mat of grass or litter.** Sample the lawn or garden area to the sampling depth indicated below.

- 1) existing grass - sample 0-3"
  - 2) new grass - sample 0-6"
  - 3) gardens - sample 0-6"
  - 4) trees & shrubs - 0-12"
  - 5) lead test - see notes on next page
- Place the soil sample in a clean bucket or pan.

- Repeat sampling in several random locations within the chosen area. Mix soil well to make ONE composite sample for the entire area, and send or bring **2-3 CUPS** of the composite sample to the lab. Use a clean, leak-proof container (e.g. disposable food storage bag or tub) and place the container inside a sturdy mailer or shipping package. Please keep your paperwork outside of the soil container, but **DO** place the form(s) and payment inside the sealed mailer or shipping package.
- Label the sample container with your name, address and sample identification (**max = 4 characters**). Fill out the other side of this form completely, and *keep a record of your sample identification*.
- **Soluble salts test:** This test should be requested if:
  - 1) "black dirt" has been hauled in and poor growth is observed,
  - 2) there is possible damage from salt used on streets and sidewalks, **or excess application of fertilizer,**
  - 3) the grass looks burned even when adequate water is present,
  - 4) the soil is poorly drained and located in the south central or western part of the state.
- **Lead Test:** Select only if lead contamination is suspected. Sample only the surface 3/4" for play areas, and surface to 3-4" for gardens. **Separate sample required.**

## HOW TO SUBMIT SAMPLES

Soil samples may be delivered in person to Room 135 Crops Research Building, University of Minnesota (see map below), or mail to:

Soil Testing and Research Analytical Laboratory  
University of Minnesota  
135 Crops Research Building  
1902 Dudley Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55108

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00am - 4:30pm  
Website: <http://soiltest.cfans.umn.edu/>  
Phone: (612) 625-3101

Enclose form and full payment for each sample to be tested. You may send one check to cover the cost of multiple samples. Make checks payable to the University of Minnesota. **Do not send cash.** The University of Minnesota will not be responsible for cash sent through the mail. The sender pays postage.

