

SOIL TESTING IS . . .

an inventory of the nutrients and acidity in the soil.

Why a Soil Test?

Soil, in its natural state, is rarely fertile enough for the best growth of plants. Usually, it is necessary to supplement the earth's store of plant nutrients before we can obtain the most vigorous lawn, the most abundant and brilliant flowers, the most aesthetically satisfying trees/shrubs and the greatest yield of tasty and nutritious vegetables, or crops. Test your soil pH, potassium, phosphorous and key elements to begin the soil improvement process.

When to Soil Test?

Proper sampling is vitally important in order to obtain accurate soil test results. Soil samples can be taken any time during the warmer months. Each sample should be taken before soil temperatures drop below 55 degrees. If the soil is too wet to spade, rototill, or hoe, it is also too wet to sample. Extremely dry soil should not be sampled.

How Often?

After the initial soil inventory, the soil should be retested every 3-5 years. Intensive use may dictate more frequent testing. Attempt to sample during the same season each time for the best comparison of soil test values.

Farm Bureau Connection:

The Cook County Farm Bureau originally started in 1920 with a purpose of soil improvement and assisting farmers with nutrient/fertility issues on their property. The program is an extension of our beginning purpose and a service to our members and community.

ADDITIONAL HELP

Additional Recommendations based on your soil sample results will be provided to you from the soil testing lab. However, we know sometimes its nice to talk with an expert about the results and what to do to improve the potential of your soil. University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners are available to answer your questions on specific issues related to your soil test. Take advantage of their knowledge and training to enhance your "growing" experiences.

MASTER GARDENER RESOURCE CENTER

OPERATES FROM
APRIL TO NOVEMBER

AT:
COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU

• OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY, THURSDAY
9:00 - 1 PM

• PHONE:
708-354-3276

• EMAIL:
MASTERGARDENER@COOKCFB.ORG

6438 Joliet Road
Countryside, IL 60525
708-354-3276



Other Help Desks:
Cook/North Suburban Master Gardener 847-818-2901
Cook/South Suburban Master Gardener 708-679-6889



Soil Testing Program



COOK COUNTY FARM BUREAU®

- *What's wrong with this lawn?*
- *Why won't my garden grow?*
- *The flowers need something...*
- *Why aren't these shrubs performing?*
- *These crops aren't yielding like they should!*

Soil testing takes the guesswork out of soil improvement, growing plants, and fertilizer recommendations.



How To Order a Soil Test...

1. Contact the Cook County Farm Bureau to request your soil test kit - by phone, mail or stop in our office.
2. Take a sample following the guidelines and fill the kit sample bag to the "fill line".
3. Complete Form 1 - (more information the better).
4. Mail completed Form 1 with soil sample bag in the enclosed pre-paid and pre-labeled USPS mailing box, at your nearest mail receptacle or post office.
5. Complete Form 2 (soil sample information sheet) and mail it using the pre-addressed stamped envelop (Be as detailed as possible for more accurate soil recommendations).
6. Receive soil test results and basic recommendations within 2 weeks.
7. Once results are received, contact your area Master Gardener for additional recommendations and guidelines.

Act upon recommendations and enjoy healthier soils and the exciting results!

Soil Test Pricing Information

Each soil sample will be tested for: **soil pH, Phosphorous, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Organic Matter, and Cation Exchange Capacity.**

1 Sample Soil Kit:
\$20.00 Members
\$30.00 Non-Members

2 Sample Soil Kit:
\$30.00 Members
\$40.00 Non-members

3 Sample Soil Kit:
\$45.00 Members
\$55.00 Non-members

Soil and Lead Testing Kit:
\$45.00 Members
\$50.00 Non-members

Lead Only Soil Test Kit:
\$37.00 Members
\$42.00 Non-members

Order & Payment Methods

- ♦ **Credit Card** payment by phone or in person (Visa, MasterCard, Discover)
- ♦ **Check** payable to the Cook County Farm Bureau can be mailed with kit request or in person
- ♦ **Cash** can be paid in person

All phone or mail in payments will result in kits being mailed to you!