

SOIL TESTING OPTIONS

pH TESTING

Drop off samples during office hours. Testing is done by Master Gardeners during Horticulture Hotline hours 9am–12pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (Fridays only, in winter). Hotline phone # 845-340-3478.

Cost and what it tells you: \$3 for first sample + \$1 each additional sample, to find out the pH (acidity or alkalinity of soil) plus soil texture. You'll receive a recommendation of how much lime or sulfur to add to adjust pH, based on what you plan to grow and the size of your garden area.

Taking samples:

- Take various samples and mix them, breaking up any clumps, to represent the area to be tested: 5-10 samples for an area 100 sq ft or less (10x10 ft), or 10-15 samples for larger areas.
- Keep lawn and garden samples separate, and take separate samples from good and bad growth areas (e.g. healthy versus bare lawn). Label final samples to be tested to differentiate.
- When taking samples, use a clean trowel and dig to 4 inches deep.
- Total amount needed for testing is ½ cup-1 cup, which you can place in a plastic bag or other clean container.
- If soil is very wet allow to air dry but do not use heat to dry.
- Measure the size of the area you sampled/that you will be modifying (ex. 10 x 12 feet).

MORE COMPREHENSIVE SOIL TESTING AVAILABLE THROUGH RUTGER'S UNIVERSITY:

1. Purchase a bag from us to send out for testing at Rutgers University.
2. Take sample according to instructions in envelope, fill out form in envelope, and place in bag provided.
3. Fill out form and mail bag (you pay postage) with additional payment if applicable (see below).
4. Rutgers will mail or email you results and recommendations (5-10 day turnaround; quickest if you provide email); our office receives a copy of so you can call us with any questions (Dona 845-340-3990 x335).

Test*	Tests for	Fee
Soil Fertility Analysis (basic test for home gardeners)	Soil pH and nutrient availability phosphorus, potassium, calcium, magnesium, copper, manganese, zinc, iron, boron	\$25 cost of bag pays for this test
Soil Health	Microbial respiration as a biological indicator Carbon dioxide test and estimate of Nitrogen availability with adjustment recommendation	Additional \$17
Plant/Soil Suitability	Additional agronomic properties soluble salt level, organic matter content, % sand/silt/clay, textural class and gravel content	Additional \$33
Topsoil Evaluation	Particle-size distribution same as above with more detailed	Additional \$66
Lead (Pb)	Soil lead screening The only contaminant test Rutgers performs	Additional \$17, or just lead test instead of Soil Fertility Analysis

* Other tests are available through Rutgers; contact Rutgers at 848-932-9295 or go to <http://njaes.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab/services.asp>