How To Take A Soil Sample

- Remove surface debris, such as plant residues, mulch or turf thatch from the soil before inserting the soil probe, spade, or trowel.
- Sample gardens and shrub and flower beds to a depth of 6-8 inches.
- Sample turf areas to a 3-inch depth.
- Sample tree root zones to 8-12 inches or deeper.
- Sample row crops (in gardens) between the rows to avoid fertilizer bands.
- Sample light, dark-colored, limed and unlimed areas separately.
- Sample front and back yard separately if they have been managed differently or contain different types of fill soil.
- Dry samples at room temperature (do not use artificial heat).
- Break up any lumps and remove all stones, debris, etc.
- When dry, mix well and crush so all the soil is the size of wheat grains or smaller, but do not pulverize.
- Place one cup sample in a clean, clear plastic container or bag, labeled with your name.

This material may be available in alternative formats.  
For more information on the subject discussed in this publication, consult your local office of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service:

3000 Technology Ave., Suite L2110 · New Albany, IN 47150-3570  
(812) 948-5470 · FAX: (812) 945-1168  
Purdue University, Indiana Counties and U.S Department of Agriculture Cooperating  
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

Soil Testing Available at Your Floyd County Purdue Extension Office

Why do you test your soil?
- Nitrogen (N)
- Phosphorous (P)
- Potassium (K)
- Soil pH (a measure of acidity or alkalinity)

When can you take a Soil Sample?
- Anytime
- Well before planting
- Once every three to five years

When do I get my Soil Sample results back?
- It usually takes two to four weeks to receive your results via email.

What is the cost of a Soil Sample Test?
- There is a $20.00 fee for each Soil Sample Test (cash or check only—Ck to Purdue CES Ed Fund)

What type of Soil Samples are tested in the office?
- Turf/Lawn (3 inches deep)
- Flower Garden (4-6 inches deep)
- Vegetable Garden (4-6 inches deep)
- Trees/Shrubs (4-8 inches deep)
- Fruits (4-6 inches deep)
- We do not test Agricultural or Commercial Hort samples

How do I take a Soil Sample?
- See Reverse

www.extension.purdue.edu/floyd