

FBMG Help Desk
Question of the Week

Is testing my soil really that important?

Answer: Absolutely!





Healthy Soil is a Must for;



healthy lawns, trees, vegetables, flowers, fruits and habitats

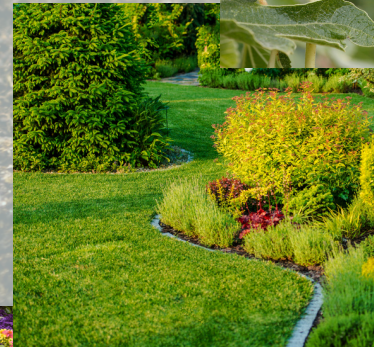
A soil test is the first step to making sure that your soil is healthy. It will guide you as to what if anything and how much to add to ensure gardening success.

Soil testing will show:

- *the ph level*
- *the nutrient levels*
- *will give a baseline so comparisons can be made from test to test*
- *problems with soil*
- *the correct levels of nutrients to add*

Soil testing helps:

- *save time and money because the correct nutrients are added*
- *prevent runoff of excess nutrients thus reducing pollution*
- *contribute to the best success for plantings*



Healthy soil builds healthy ecosystem.

A healthy ecosystem has many benefits.

Healthy soil is the foundation for healthy plants which are better able reach their full potential and resist disease.



It all starts with a soil test!

- *A healthy lawn will be more efficient at choking out weeds.*
- *A healthy flower garden will help keep weeds down and provide food and home for pollinators.*
- *Pollinators are effective in pollinating the fruits, vegetables as well as other vegetation.*
- *Healthy fruits and vegetables provide food for the table.*
- *Healthy trees provide shade, visual interest, can help with utility bills and provide homes to wildlife.*
- *Knowing exactly what to add to the soil will save time and money by putting the correct nutrients down the first time*
- *Minimizing the amount of nutrients added will minimize runoff contributing to a healthier environment.*



Ca

What is wrong with my.....

Mg

Lack of nutrients?

The answer to multiple garden, lawn, tree and plant concerns begin with the same answer.

A soil test will provide a soil analysis.

Nutrient

A substance that an organism needs to live and to grow.

Ph

Q & A

- *Which fertilizer is best for the lawn?*
 - *A proper recommendation requires knowing what is in the soil.*
- *What should be added to the flower or vegetable beds before planting?*
 - *A proper recommendation requires knowing what is in the soil.*
- *What causes blossom end rot?*
 - *Usually a lack of calcium. Incorrect PH can prevent the plant from absorbing the calcium.*

Fe

B

Soil! It's where plants live!

Healthy organisms are better able to thrive and fend off disease.

Have your soil tested.

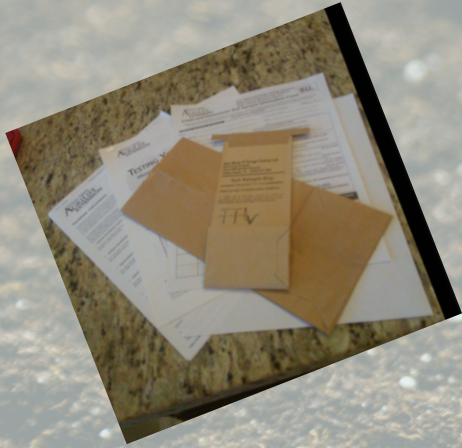
It is easy and well worth the effort.

go to soiltesting.tamu.edu

Print the Urban Soil Submittal Form (1 form per sample)

soil submittal form urban 2023 (tamu.edu)

fill it out and follow the directions on the page 2 and below



The nutrients in the soil are taken up by the plant, however sometimes the plant isn't able to take up the nutrients due to incorrect ph or even it is taking up the nutrients one or more or missing. A soil test can help identify these issues.

The soil Analysis Report will show the current levels of nutrients as provide fertilizer recommendations of N-P-K

All actions to improve soil can then become more deliberate.



Get a Test For Each Area of your Yard

Remove the Guess Work

Your yard has multiple areas, the lawn, the raised bed, the vegetable garden, the butterfly garden, the front yard, the back yard and so on. They may be the same or they may be different.



Your drawing can be as simple or detailed as you choose.

Consider a test for each area.

- *Make a simple drawing or sketch of your yard.*
- *Label each area 1,2,3 or A,B,C*
- *Label each bag and soil sample submittal form with the corresponding number or letter*
- *Collect the soil samples and send them in.*
- *When they come back to you with the specific recommendations you will know what nutrients each area of your yard needs.*

*Do you have questions about
your home landscape and
plants?*

*Contact the Fort Bend Master
Gardener Help Desk*

Email:

FortBendmg@ag.tamu.edu

Phone:

281-341-7068

*The Help Desk is manned
Monday thru Friday,
9am-Noon*

*<https://cdnde.agrilife.org/extension/department/s/scsc/scsc-pu-043/publications/files/testing-your-soil-how-to-collect-and-send-samples.pdf>
Blossom-End Rot in the Home Garden |
Extension Marketing and Communications
(ncsu.edu)
(PDF) Understanding soil test results - infographic
Blossom End Rot - Vegetable Resources Vegetable
Resources (tamu.edu)
blossomendrot.pdf (cornell.edu)
Tomato | Texas Plant Disease Handbook
(tamu.edu) Texas Plant Disease Handbook
<https://extension.msu.edu>
Soil, Water, and Forage Testing Lab Website
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Soil,
Water and Forage Testing Laboratory (tamu.edu)
Fertilizer Calculators for Texas A&M University
Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory
(tamu.edu)
Urban Fertilizer Calculator with Lists (tamu.edu)
Soil testing: Why it is important
(farmmanagement.pro)
Soil Testing and Soil Testing Labs | University of
Maryland Extension (umd.edu)
How to Do a Soil Test to Your Lawn (And Read It)
- Plant for Success
Soils and Plant Nutrients Chapter of the North
Carolina Extension Gardener Handbook
SWFTL Urban Fertilizer Calculator with Lists
(tamu.edu)*