



FBMG Help Desk
Question of the Week

We are re-doing a flower bed. What should we do to have the best success?

A few simple steps are in order...

Begin with a soil test

Remove the Guess Work

You should begin any new planting project with a soil test. Testing results will show you what nutrients your native soil may need to support a vibrant garden. If you are putting in a large flower bed, consider multiple soil tests from different parts of the bed



It is easy and well worth the effort.

go to

<https://soiltesting.tamu.edu/webpages/forms.html>

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***

Observe the area to be planted

What is it like?

Is the sunlight direct or indirect? How many hours of sunlight a day does it receive?

What about water is it a high spot in your yard or a low spot?



- Time spent on observations will help ensure you purchase the correct plant.
- Consider if there will be shrubs, trees or flowers only in your new bed and make sure that there is space for all.
- Make sure that you have water available with either a sprinkler or hose system.
- Will there be hardscape like a birdbath? If so leave room for it in your planting.

Selecting you plants

Choosing the proper plantings for your new bed

The concept is to choose plants that provide visual and textural interest and fit your environment and exposure, but beyond that, read the grower's recommended planting instructions and placement

Planting and planning best practices;

- *plan your bed planting with the tallest plants in the back (if along a fence or other hardscape) or in the center of the bed.*
- *shorter plantings to the front or edge of the bed*
- *have a plan for color and texture - choose plants that compliment each other or make a visual statement.*
- *read the grower's tag for recommended planting depth and separation, water requirements and sun exposure.*
- *provide the recommended amount of mulch to protect your new plantings.*



You may consider native plants

Native plants have many pros!

From an ecological, economical and convenience perspective, you cannot beat a Texas native plant



- Native plants reduce the strain on resources, as they typically require less water, minimal use of chemicals and can be self-renewing.
- Texas native plants are acclimated to our sometimes fickle environment.
- Many local nurseries stock Texas native plants.
- Many colors, textures, sizes and shapes are available.
- Many opportunities to view native plants:
 - FBMG Demonstration Gardens, Botanical gardens in your area,

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/departments/scsc/scsc-pu-043/publications/files/testing-your-soil-how-to-collect-and-send-samples.pdf> (PDF) Understanding soil test results
Urban Fertilizer Calculator with Lists (tamu.edu)
Soil testing: Why it is important (farmmanagement.pro)
Basic Plant Care: Understanding Your Plant's Needs | Oklahoma State University. (okstate.edu)
Basic Plant Care: Understanding Your Plant's Needs Right Plant, Right Place – Match plants with their preferred growing site | Nebraska Extension in Lancaster County. (unl.edu).
see our past QOTW*

