

Soil Sampling Information  
MSU Extension U.P. County Offices

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For more information, contact



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#### Sampling Instructions:

- MSU recommends a minimum of 1 sample per 20 acres, more if known differences exist in soil type or management history.
- Using a soil probe, spade or trowel, and a clean plastic pail, sample in a zigzag fashion throughout a uniform area.
- Take a representative sampling of the soil in the area you are testing, 15-20 subsamples are recommended for a 20-acre field, at least 6-8 for a small plot.
- Sampling depths are as follows:
  - Field Soils – 8 inches
  - Garden Soils – 6 to 8 inches
  - Lawn – 3 inches below turf
- Combine all samples into the plastic pail and mix thoroughly. Fill a soil sample box with the sample, or package about a pint of soil. If soil is wet, spread it on paper and allow to air-dry overnight. Do not heat the soil.
- Fill out an information form and send it in with the soil sample to the soil testing lab.

#### **Home Gardener Samples**

The NEW Home Yard and Garden Soil Test Mailer can be used to process any type of home soil sample (***lawn, vegetable garden, tree, shrub, flower, and tree/small fruit***) and will be available at county MSU Extension offices. **OR** through the MSUE Bookstore [www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu](http://www.bookstore.msue.msu.edu), search for the mailer using SKU #: E3154. Cost is \$25 each.

#### **Commercial Samples (i.e. farmers, wildlife plots, septage)**

Pick up a soil test box and information form from a county MSU Extension Office. Cost is \$12 each. Client is responsible for mailing sample to the soil testing lab at Michigan State University.

#### **When will I receive the results?**

**Home Gardener Samples:** You will receive an e-mail within 10 days after your sample is received at the MSU Soil Nutrient and Plant Lab letting you know your results are available at MSUSOILTEST.com. If you submit your sample without an e-mail address, it may take slightly longer for you to receive your results in the mail.

**Commercial Samples:** Allow 10-14 days. You will receive a mailed soil test report with fertilizer recommendations. If you provide an email, you will receive the report electronically sooner.

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Toll-free number for MSU Gardening Hotline and all MSUE county offices: 1-888-678-3464

### Samples of useful MSU Extension (and other) websites:

- MSU Extension website <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/>
  - MSUE News articles in 13 categories including
    - Beef, Dairy, Farm Management, Field Crops, Floriculture, Fruit and Nuts, Horses, Nursery & Christmas Trees, Organic Agriculture, Pork, Poultry, Sheep & Goats, Vegetables
    - RSS Feed available
- U.P. Ag Connections newsletter <http://agbioresearch.msu.edu/uprc/newsletter.html>
- Gardening in Michigan website <http://migarden.msu.edu/>
- MSU Hoophouse website <http://hoophouse.msu.edu/index.php?q=home>
- MSU Organic Farming Exchange website  
<http://www.michiganorganic.msu.edu/michiganorganic/home>
- MSU Center for Regional Food Systems <http://www.foodsystems.msu.edu>
- Soil testing services <http://www.css.msu.edu/SPNL/>
- Diagnostic services <http://www.pestid.msu.edu/>
- Diagnostic Center for Population and Animal Health <http://www.animalhealth.msu.edu/>
- MSU Product Center for Agriculture and Natural Resources <http://www.productcenter.msu.edu/>
- National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (ATTRA) –not MSU, but good information  
<https://attra.ncat.org/index.php>
- Marquette Food Coop <http://marquettefood.coop/>
- U.P. Food Exchange <http://upfoodexchange.com/>