



Question of the Week

Q: Why do I need a periodic soil test?

A: Experienced farmers and gardeners consider soil testing a cheap, invaluable form of crop insurance. A soil test measures the amounts of nutrients essential to plant growth, determines the pH (level of acidity), and examines the texture of your soil. After conducting its analysis, the lab sends you a report summarizing the test results and providing recommendations for fertilizing and amending your soil for optimum plant growth. This allows you to customize fertilizer and lime applications for your plants' specific needs. Following the recommendations will help maximize yields, save money, and prevent the many problems that can arise from nutrient deficiencies, over-fertilization, or a pH that's too high or too low.

To get the information and forms you need to collect and submit a soil sample, visit the Cooperative Extension soil testing Web page <http://extension.unh.edu/Agric/AGPDTS/SoilTest.htm>, or contact the Family, Home & Garden Education Center (see below).

Got questions? UNH Cooperative Extension's Family, Home & Garden Education Center Info Line offers practical help finding answers for your lawn and garden questions. Call toll free at 1-877-398-4769, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., or e-mail us at answers@unh.edu