

How does your garden grow?

What's wrong with this lawn?

Why are these shrubs not performing?

The flowers need something...

My crops aren't yielding like they should?



Pricing Information:

Each soil sample will be tested for: soil pH, Phosphorus, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Organic Matter, and Cation Exchange Capacity.

1 Sample

\$20.00 Members  
\$30.00 Non-members

2 Samples

\$30.00 Members  
\$40.00 Non-members

3 Samples

\$45.00 Members  
\$55.00 Non-members

Soil and Lead Test:

\$45.00 Members  
\$50.00 Non-members

Lead Test Only:

\$37.00 Members  
\$42.00 Non-members

Payment: Call Cook County Farm Bureau at 708-354-3276 to pay by credit card (Visa/Mastercard/Discover) or send a check payable to Cook County Farm Bureau. Upon payment, your soil test kit will be sent to you.

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Countryside, IL 60525  
Phone: 708-354-3276  
Fax: 708-579-6056  
E-Mail: [ccfb@cookcfb.org](mailto:ccfb@cookcfb.org)  
Website: [www.cookcfb.org](http://www.cookcfb.org)

Cook/North Suburban Master Gardener 847-818-2901  
Cook/South Suburban Master Gardener 708-679-6889

**Cook County  
Farm Bureau  
Soil Testing  
Program**

*Does your  
Soil pass the  
test?*



*Fertility Matters!*

*Soil Testing takes  
the guesswork out  
of fertilizer  
recommendations.*

The CCFB Soil Test Kit is designed to identify the soils' basic plant nutritional levels in a convenient manner.

# *Soil Test...an inventory of the nutrients and acidity in the soil.*

## Why a Soil Test?

Soil in its natural state is rarely fertile enough for the best growth of plants. Usually, it is necessary to supplement the earth's store of plant nutrients before we can obtain the most vigorous lawn, the most abundant and brilliant flowers, the most aesthetically satisfying trees/shrubs and the greatest yield of tasty and nutritious vegetables or crops. Test your soil for pH, potassium, phosphorus and other key elements to begin the soil improvement process.

## When to Soil Test?

Proper sampling is vitally important in order to obtain accurate soil test results. Soil samples can be taken any time during the warmer months. Each sample should be taken before soil temperatures drop below 55 degrees. If the soil is too wet to spade, rototill or hoe, it is also too wet to sample. Extremely dry soil should not be sampled.

## How often?

After the initial soil inventory, the soil should be retested every 3-5 years. Intensive use may dictate more frequent testing. Attempt to sample during the same season each time for the best comparison of soil test values.

## How do you collect a sample for Lawn /Garden

To take the sample, use a sampling tube, spade, trowel or long knife. Sample 6-8" deep for gardens, shrubs, or trees and 3-4" for turf. Discard any surface residue, thatch or stones.

Sample different areas of the turf, garden or landscape separately. From each distinct area take several cores or slices.

Combine the cores or slices in a bucket and mix well. Transfer a portion of the mixed sample to a soil sample bag. Label and number the sample bag.

Enclose the soil sample bag in a shipping box. Place the soil sample submittal sheet into the box with the samples. Fasten securely and ship using the enclosed UPS label.

## Farm Bureau and why we are helping

The Cook County Farm Bureau originally started in 1920 with a purpose of soil improvement and assisting farmers with nutrient/fertility issues on their property. This program is an extension of our beginning purpose and a service for members/non-members.

## Additional Help

Recommendations based on your soil sample results will be provided to you from the soil testing lab. However, we know that sometimes it is nice to talk with an expert about the results and what to do to improve the potential of your soil. University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners are available to answer your questions on specific issues related to your soil test. Take advantage of their knowledge and training to enhance your "growing" experiences. Contact information for the Master Gardeners is on the reverse side of this brochure.

## Explanation of Program

In today's busy and hectic world, we understand the demands on time that everyone is facing everyday. Therefore, Cook County Farm Bureau's soil testing program is designed for convenience and simplicity. Follow the steps below and the soil fertility results will be returned within 2 weeks, ready to use:

1. Contact the Cook County Farm Bureau to request your soil test kit. Pay for the kit using your credit card or send a check.
2. Take the sample following sample guidelines on Form 1 and fill the sample bag to fill line.
3. Complete Form 1 (soil sample submittal form) and enclose with the soil sample mailing.
4. Send the soil sample and the completed Form 1 in the enclosed UPS shipping box. Place UPS Ground shipping label on box. Drop it off at the nearest UPS shipping site the same day.
5. Complete Form 2 (soil sample information sheet) and return it to the Cook County Farm Bureau in the pre-addressed stamped envelope.
6. Receive test results and basic recommendations within two weeks.
7. Contact Master Gardener for additional recommendations and guidelines.
8. Act upon results and enjoy healthier soils and the exciting results.