

North Dakota
State University

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Send us an email!

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The Field Report

NDSU Soil Testing Lab

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New Features

During the past year, the Soil Testing Lab has been busy processing soil samples and serving our customers. Recently, we developed some new features in our database that will serve farmers and researchers even better!

Field ID: On the farmer report, if the acreage and Section Township and Range information is included on the soil sample information sheet, it will be printed on the reports that are returned to you. We hope this will help in identifying your fields.

Price List: In an effort to remain competitive in soil testing, we will be implementing our new price list for 2012. You will notice some new services that were not offered in the past. For the most current price list, visit our website at www.ndsu.edu/soils/services/soil_testing_lab/.

Reminder: If receiving your results through email for the first time, please add NDSU.STL@ndsu.edu to your safe sender list to ensure delivery. The Soil Testing Lab is not responsible for deliveries to inboxes that are full or blocked. We would be more than willing to mail a hard copy or resend your results; just give us a call. We also have the ability to send results to multiple email addresses. (for example, home and work address). Just note this information on the soil information sheet.

Default exporting: In our society, electronic communication has taken over many aspects of business, and the Soil Testing Lab is not exempt. In an effort to “keep up with the times,” we implemented automatic emails last summer, and it has been immensely successful. More than 70 percent of our reports are emailed to customers, resulting in a faster turnaround and fewer resources used. However, we have discovered that some customers would prefer certain formats rather than others (pdf, hard copy, Excel spreadsheet, fax or a combination of these). Beginning in early 2012, we will have the ability to set up default exporting. Just let us know how you would like to receive your results and this is how you will receive your results every time unless you instruct us otherwise.

Don't forget: We will test your lawn and garden samples! Your report will contain nutrient levels and a recommendation tailored to your specific needs.

How much soil should be sent for each soil test?

Each soil test requires us to use dried, ground soil that will pass through a 1-millimeter sieve. Each test also requires a different amount of soil, depending on which test is going to be run. For each test, we mix a scoop of soil (see photo below) and a solution, depending on which test we are running, before analyzing it with a piece of scientific equipment.

Be sure to fill each soil bag with the composite sample up to at least the black line near the top of the bag. After fully drying and grinding the sample, depending on the soil texture (clays, large stones and gravel, etc.), the sample can be reduced by up to half of what was sent. If we do not receive enough of the sample, we are unable to complete the tests.

Keep in mind, the recommendation for each nutrient is made from one scoop of soil (less than 10 grams). Sending a representative sample of the field is important. A good practice is to take at least 20 subsamples across the entire field, which then should be mixed thoroughly before being placed in a soil bag.



Our newest addition!



We have added an AA3 Segmented Flow Multi-Chemistry Analyzer, which will allow us to be more efficient and accurate in our soil testing practices.

“The Field Report”

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