

TAKING ROUTINE SOIL SAMPLES FOR CULTIVATED CROPS

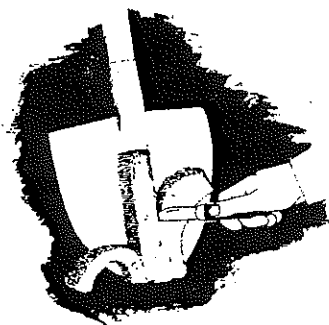
- 1 Obtain cartons and information sheets from your county agent, the State Soil Testing Laboratory, or other sources.

2

Map the different areas within a field—such as hilltops, mid-slopes, bottomlands, or known areas of different productivity. With a sampling tube take 10 to 15 cores, spaced an equal distance apart. Sample 10 to 12 inches deep in central Washington and to tillage depth for the rest of the state. Place cores from each sampling area in a clean bucket. Mix this composite sample well and fill the soil sample carton (about 1 pint). Repeat this process for each area in the field. One composite sample should never represent more than 4 acres in central Washington.



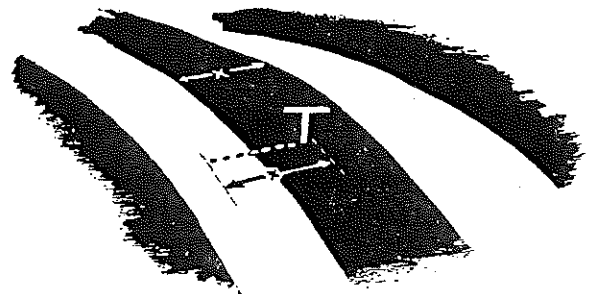
- 3 A field that is extremely variable, or one where little is known about its variability, requires many samples. Once a field has been intensively sampled and a soil fertility map made, select a site in a representative low, medium, and high fertility area of the field that can be resampled every two to three years. Periodic resampling will show if the general soil fertility level in each area is improving or getting worse. For details of intensive sampling, see XB 788, "Soil Variability in Central Washington," and your county agent.

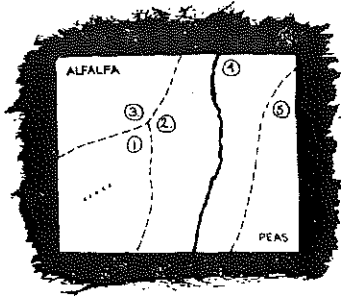


- 4 It is best to use a sampling tube if that is possible. If you use a spade or shovel, throw away the first shovel full. Then take a 1-inch slice from the back side of the hole (to proper sampling depth), trim away sides of slice leaving a 1-inch center core. Place core in a clean bucket, following procedure given in item 2. A garden trowel can be used in place of a spade or shovel.

5

If the field has been band fertilized, use a sampling tube to obtain a series of cores 2 inches apart across the direction of fertilizer application and for a distance equal to that between the fertilizer bands. Sample four or five locations in the area to be represented by the sample. Crush the cores, mix thoroughly, and fill the sample box.

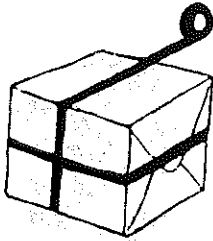
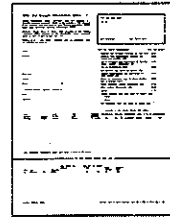




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Draw a map similar to the example for each area of the field. Mark where each core sample came from. Use this map when you get your soil test results.

7 Fill out the information sheet as directed. The more information you give, the more accurate the fertilizer suggestions will be.

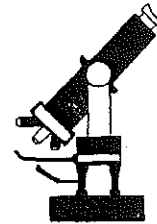


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Wrap the samples securely for mailing.

9 Mail to Soil Testing Laboratory, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164

OUT OF SERVICE



SAMPLING TURF AREAS

**Home Lawns,
Playfields**

If there are different conditions in the lawn, sample each area separately, then follow the procedures described for standard sampling except sample only 4 inches deep.

Golf Courses

Sample greens separately—6 to 8 cores from each, 4 inches deep. Sample fairways separately, following the procedure outlined for home lawns. Tees may be sampled separately, following the procedure for greens.

**Permanent
Pastures**

For central Washington irrigated areas, follow the procedure outlined for standard field sampling. In other areas of the state, take samples only 5 to 6 inches deep. Be sure to sample several feet away from livestock droppings. In western Washington, avoid ash residues from brush and stump pile burns.

The samples for standard tests may either be air-dried or sent without drying. Never heat the soil. Completely fill the sample box. Mark it plainly and send to Soil Testing Laboratory, Washington State University, Pullman, WA 99164.

OTHER SAMPLING INFORMATION

Residual Nitrates in Irrigated Soils—see Extension Multilith 3076

Moisture and Nitrate Testing for Dry Land Wheat—in eastern Washington, obtain special instructions from your county agent or Soil Conservation District soils laboratory and see Extension Multilith 3523

Salinity and Sodic (Alkali) Soil Diagnosis—see your county agent

Soil Variability in Central Washington—see XB 788

Tree Fruit Soil Management, Soil Fertility and Special Soil Problems—see Fertilizer Guide Series 28c

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