

SOIL SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

When collecting samples for the SME analysis, it is important not only to collect a **representative sample** but also to provide the laboratory with an **adequate sample size**.

Please note: Unless a representative soil sample is taken, the analysis and interpretation are of no value.

Follow these simple directions:

1) WHEN TO SAMPLE DEPENDS ON YOUR FERTILIZER REGIME:

For **constant liquid feed or regular periodic liquid feeds** (i.e. once a week) take samples about 4 hours after fertilizing or at least the same day.

For **crops with slow release fertilizer** that receive infrequent fertilizer supplements, sample 4 hours after watering.

2) Always be consistent in sampling protocol if reports are to be compared.

3) SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING SAMPLES:

Bench Crops: Take a full core of potting medium from top to bottom of bench from 10 locations. Mix in clean container.

Potted Plants: Take slices from side of root ball from 10 or more pots. Mix in clean container

Potting or Transplanting Mixes or Compost Pile: Take small portions from 10 or more locations in pile. Mix in clean container.

Never sample from just the top 1/3rd of pot, results will overestimate fertility.

4) Remove slow release prills as best as possible.

5) Transfer 1 1/2 to 2 cups of the potting mixture from the clean container to a zipper-lock bag, and label the outside of the bag with a sample name or number.

6) Samples may be brought or mailed to the Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory along with a filled out greenhouse questionnaire and payment. Contact the lab if you are interested in purchasing prepaid soil collection kits.

7) A copy of the results of the analysis will be sent to you. Results can also be faxed upon request. **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE FERTILIZER RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY DR. RICHARD MCAVOY, EXTENSION SPECIALIST – GREENHOUSE CROPS, BE SURE TO CHECK OFF THE APPROPRIATE BOX ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE. RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE INCLUDED ONLY IF A RECOMMENDATION IS REQUESTED.**