

Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory

Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory; 6 Sherman Place, Unit 5102, Storrs, CT 06269-5102 • Phone: 860-486-4274
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Sampling Directions for Pre-sidedress Soil Nitrate Test



1. Sample when corn is 8 to 12 inches tall:
 - a. Sample the surface 12-inch layer of soil.
 - b. Obtain 15 to 20 cores per sample area. If the field to be sampled is larger than 15 acres, divide the field into 2 or more sample areas, if it is convenient and feasible to do so.
 - c. Avoid row fertilizer bands (e.g., starter) by sampling midway between the rows. Avoid sampling areas where manure was piled or where manure application was unusually heavy or light.
 - d. Mix cores thoroughly in a clean pail; take 1 cup as the sample. Place sample in cloth bag, close, and make sure to write name and sample ID on yellow tag.
 - e. Fill out PSNT sample submission form.
2. Use of cloth bags eliminates the need to store and transport samples in Styrofoam coolers. The use of cloth bags does not eliminate the need to protect moist soil samples from temperatures above 75 degrees F. Cloth sample bags can be obtained free of charge from the Lab.
3. Refrigerate samples if they cannot be analyzed within three days. Samples expected to spend more than three days without refrigeration should be dried as soon as possible. Samples can be air-dried by spreading in a thin layer – a fan will accelerate drying.
4. Samples that are extremely wet or muddy should be dried before shipping or storage. Incorrect results will be obtained if water drips from the samples.
5. Mailing samples usually poses no problem if samples spend no more than three days without refrigeration. Overnight delivery is preferable.
6. The procedures for providing results to growers will be unchanged. The UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory typically faxes the results and recommendations to regional dairy educators or growers the day after receiving the samples. If you would prefer to receive results by email, please include your email address. The results also will be mailed to the grower.
7. We strongly recommend that you make every effort to obtain a 12-inch deep sample because our research data demonstrates that the most accurate recommendations are obtained from 12-inch samples. But if you cannot sample this deep, please note the average depth of sampling (e.g., 8 inches) in the column provided. This information will be used to adjust your N recommendation. A higher rate of N will be recommended for most soils because nitrate concentrations normally decrease with depth.

For more information contact: Tom Morris at (860) 486-0637, Richard Meinert at (860) 567-9447, Joyce Meader at (860) 774-9600, or the UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab at (860)486-4274.

