



Grid Sampling

Overview

An accurate soil map is important when efficiently managing fields and soil fertility levels. Grid sampling is an effective soil sampling method to use when fields have a high number of soil types or textures, and when previous cropping and management practices have changed or are unknown.

What you should know

- Soil sampling is essential in determining which nutrients, and at what levels, are available in fields.
- Although grid sampling can be a costly soil sampling practice, it does provide a detailed analysis of which and what levels of fertility inputs should be applied to fields, especially when previous management and cropping histories are unknown or ineffective.
- Soil maps should be updated every 4–6 years and at the same time of year to properly compare new and old maps.
- Based on the results of your soil sampling, an updated soil map of your fields can help you create a management plan with the right inputs for maximizing yields.

Action steps

1. **Create a grid:** Divide fields into grid cells to sample individually. An average cell size is 2½ acres. Smaller grid cells provide more samples and a more accurate soil map.
2. **Collect samples:** Treat each grid cell as its own field, taking up to 10 random samples per cell to avoid systematic patterns such as starter or replant bands. Take each sample from a depth of approximately 8 inches to collect mobile and non-mobile nutrients.
3. **Submit samples:** Take soil samples to your county's extension office or a private lab for testing and analysis. Fall sampling typically produces faster results.



Take 10 random samples per grid cell when grid sampling.



30-Second Summary

- Soil sampling is essential in determining which nutrients, and at what levels, are available in fields.
- Divide fields into 2½-acre samples to create an accurate soil map.
- After sampling, create a soil map and management plan for more productive fields and higher yields.

NOTES:

For more information, contact:



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