

Free soil tests

Through a grant provided by Johnson County Stormwater Management, Johnson County K-State Research and Extension is once again offering a limited number of free soil tests this year. The free tests are good for a routine soil analysis which tests the pH, phosphorus and potassium levels of the soil. (This is a basic fertility test, sufficient for most homeowner lawns and gardens and agriculture producers, and normally costs \$12.)



Who is eligible for a free test

Johnson County homeowners are eligible to receive **one free test per household**.

Johnson County agriculture producers, which includes pastures, row crops and commercial horticulture, are eligible to receive up to **ten free agriculture soil tests**.



What to do with your samples

Bring or mail your:

1. Completed forms,
 2. Bagged soil, and
 3. Check or cash for additional tests
- Make checks payable to:**
Johnson County Extension Council.

To: Johnson County K-State Research and Extension

11811 S. Sunset Dr. Suite 1500,
Olathe, KS 66061-7507
Office hours: Monday – Friday,
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Lab results

Samples are sent to the Soil Testing Laboratory at Kansas State University. Their lab results will be analyzed by our horticulture and agriculture agents here in Johnson County. They will make recommendations specific to your needs. A report will be mailed to you.

The average time required to complete the analysis for lawn/garden samples is 2 – 3 weeks. For AG samples, 2 weeks. **During the spring season, turn-around times may take longer due to the increase in samples volume. Please take this into consideration in your planning.**

johnson.ksu.edu/soiltest
913 715 7000

Funding for this free offer courtesy of
Johnson County Stormwater Management.

K-STATE
Research and Extension
Johnson County

JOHNSON COUNTY
KANSAS
Public Works

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Free Soil Tests for Johnson County Residents

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What is a soil test?

A soil test measures soil pH and available nutrients in the soil. It cannot identify insects, diseases, or chemical pollutants, and cannot answer questions about soil composition, drainage or compaction.

Why test the soil?

Testing the soil gives you accurate information about the type and amount of fertilizer or amendment to apply in order to maintain good plant health. This helps protect the environment, and can save you money and time.

Knowing the base fertility of the soil is important for proper plant growth. Soil testing is the only way to know the nutrient levels in your soil.

Applying fertilizer without a current soil test is sure to cost you in either over-application or under-production. Applying the proper amount also decreases runoff that can pollute waterways.

For Agriculture production, a soil test is the starting point for determining how much and which fertilizers to use on a crop. Without a soil test, the true soil fertility level is just anyone's guess.



How to take a good soil sample

Proper collection of a representative soil sample is important for accuracy and analysis of test results. Follow these steps to obtain a good sample:

Homeowners

- Use a clean shovel or soil probe. Dig down vertically to a depth of:
 - 3 inches for lawns,
 - 6 inches for vegetables, flowers, and small fruits,
 - 10 to 12 inches for trees and shrubs.
- Take at least 4 – 5 samples from the area to be tested. Mix samples together in a clean, plastic container. Remove all plant debris.
- Create separate samples for each area tested. Place 2 cups each in a plastic bag.
- Avoid sampling overly wet soil, and soil that has been recently fertilized.
- Samples should be dry. Do not use heat to dry your sample.

AG Producers

Decide if fields can be treated as one sample or need separate samples. If you believe the soil type, previous crop and fertilizer treatments are consistent across the field, treat it as one sample. If soil type and topography change across the field, different crops have been planted on different parts of the field, or there are problem spots, break the field down into smaller units to sample.

- Use a clean shovel or soil probe. Dig down vertically to a depth of:
 - 4 inches for pastures
 - 6 inches for row crops,
 - if available nitrogen, chloride, or sulphur tests are desired, a subsoil sample to 24 inches is necessary.



- Take 10 – 15 samples per field.
- Mix samples together in a clean, plastic container. The more sub-samples you take, the more assured you'll be that soil test results are representative of your field. Remove all plant material or debris. Place separate samples in their own plastic bag, 2 cups per sample.
- Samples should be dry. Do not use heat to dry your sample.

Soil test forms

Download forms at www.johnson.ksu.edu/soiltest. Select the correct form for the type of plants in the soil you want tested:

- Farmer Sample Information Sheet 2010
- Flowers and Ornamentals Soil Test
- Lawns and Other Turf Soil Test
- Vegetables Fruits and Nuts Soil Test

Print the form and answer all the questions as completely as possible.

To give you the best recommendations, we need to know about your fertilization practices, soil amendments, mowing/turf, and any special problems. The more details you provide, the more detailed our recommendations.