

What analysis should I request?

The standard soil test from most laboratories measures organic matter, phosphorus (P), potassium (K), calcium (Ca), magnesium (Mg), sodium (Na), and soil pH (acidity). For acidic soils, the SMP buffer test is the best way to determine how much lime is needed. Certain crops might have higher requirements for specific nutrients. Consult OSU Extension publications to determine whether you should test for nutrients such as sulfur (S), boron (B), or zinc (Zn).

Special soil-sampling techniques sometimes are required

- Nitrate nitrogen soil tests are recommended only for new crops in eastern Oregon.
- For orchards, leaf sampling is more useful than soil sampling.

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