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# Be Sure with a Soil Test



It's easy as....

Federal Cooperative Extension Service  
Oregon State College • Corvallis

Extension Circular 648

May 1958



**A**

See your County Extension Agent for information sheets and soil cartons

**B**

Sample your soil properly. See Extension Circular 628, "How to Take a Soil Sample."

**C**

Fill out the information sheets as completely as possible.



## What a "Standard" Soil Test Will Tell You

### pH (soil reaction)

Shows the degree of acidity or alkalinity of the soil. This indicates the need for lime on acid soils or reclamation measures on alkaline soils.

### Phosphorus

A soil test will show whether or not phosphorus fertilizer is needed. The amount to apply will vary with the needs of the crop. Take a soil test and be sure.

### Potassium

While some Oregon soils are well supplied with potassium, areas of deficiency are showing up through soil testing, especially in southern Oregon and parts of the Willamette Valley. Yours might be one of these areas.

### Lime Requirement (acid soils only)

This test tells the amount of lime needed to neutralize an acid soil. The amount of lime recommended may vary according to the needs of the crop to be planted.

### Calcium and Magnesium

In most cases calcium and magnesium needs of plants are supplied by the addition of limestone or dolomite. Some vegetable crops—especially cole crops—may need additional magnesium. A soil test will show how much.

### Total Salts and Sodium (alkaline soils only)

Tells the amount of salt and sodium in the soil and the degree to which it may be harmful to the crop. Further tests may be needed to determine corrective measures.

## These Additional Tests Are Available

### Lime Requirement and Phosphorus

This is a special soil test to satisfy requirements of the Agricultural Conservation Program. Farmers are urged to obtain the more complete "Standard" soil test so that better fertilizer recommendations may be made.

### Organic Matter

Organic matter improves water penetration and moisture-holding capacity of the soil. It also improves soil structure and tilth, making soils easier to work. Organic matter levels change slowly and tests need not be made oftener than 5 to 10 years for each field.

### Boron

Tests show the level of boron in Oregon soils is being depleted by crop removal and leaching. Boron is especially necessary for legumes and many vegetable crops. It pays to know how much you need.

Soil testing is done by the  
**Soil Testing Laboratory**

Oregon State College  
Corvallis, Oregon



## How often will your field have to be sampled?

A soil test can be used to plan a fertilizer program for a 3- to 4-year period. Where exceptionally high rates of fertilizer are applied it might be well to sample oftener.

## How long will it take?

It takes approximately three weeks from the time the soil sample is mailed to the laboratory until fertilizer recommendations are received from your County Extension Agent. Soil samples may be taken at any time. Fall samples will allow plenty of time for you to arrange purchase and delivery of spring fertilizers.

## How much will it cost?

### Standard Soil Test

\$2.50 per sample. This includes lime requirement and phosphorus test for acid soils.

### Lime Requirement and Phosphorus Test

\$1.50 per sample.

### Boron

\$1.00 per sample.

### Organic Matter

\$1.00 per sample.



*See your County Extension Agent  
for other information on  
planning your  
fertilizer programs.*

This leaflet was prepared by L. A. Alban, Assistant Soil Scientist, Oregon State College, Corvallis.

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