



# Procedure for Taking Soil Samples

## Soil Sampling Area

- 1) Take one composite sample for every 10 to 40 acres. A separate sample should be taken for:
  - a) Areas with different soil types
  - b) Areas with different land uses or fertilizer application rates
  - c) Areas with different cropping histories (species and yields)
  - d) Areas with different terrain
- 2) Avoid sampling areas such as small gullies, slight field depressions, terrace, waterways, or unusual areas.
- 3) When sampling fertilized fields, avoid sampling directly in fertilized band and wait at least 2 months after last fertilization.

## Taking a Composite Sample

- 4) Use a spade, soil auger or soil sampling tube.
- 5) Clear plants and plant residue from the surface (do not remove decomposed black material that no longer can be identified as a plant).
- 6) Take a 0-6 inch sample, insure equal soil throughout this six inch depth.
- 7) It is important to **repeat steps 4-6** an additional **9 to 14 times** for each area identified in steps 1-3. Place each collected core/sample in a clean plastic bucket or other non-metallic container and thoroughly mix the soil while removing any large roots/plant tissues that might have been collected.
- 8) Fill a quart-sized freezer resealable bag half to 3/4 full for soil tests suites that do not include Detailed Salinity or Soil Texture. For sample analysis that includes Detailed Salinity and/or Soil Texture, a full rock free quart bag or full soil sample bag is required.
- 9) To improve the nitrate-nitrogen analysis, samples may be **air dried** before sending to the laboratory. **Do not use heat** to dry samples.
- 10) Label the sample bag with the identical Sample ID listed on the front side of this submittal form. Use multiple submittal sheets if needed, do not place more than one sample per line.

## Payment and Shipping

Payment options include the three options below.

- 1) Check or Money Order must be included with samples, 2) prepaid on Aggie Marketplace or 3) enter Ipayments Account Number for invoicing. A completed AG-257 must be on file with Texas A&M AgriLife Banking and Receivables for samples to be processed. Go to the laboratory website for easy access to the Aggie Marketplace payment option. Please note that the *price is per sample*.

Address the package to the appropriate address:

### **Post Office only:**

**Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory**  
**2478 TAMU**  
**College Station, TX 77843-2478**

### **FedEx, UPS and Freight Only:**

**Soil, Water and Forage Testing Laboratory**  
**2610 F&B Road**  
**College Station, TX 77845**  
**(979) 321-5960**

**Email:** [soiltesting@ag.tamu.edu](mailto:soiltesting@ag.tamu.edu) **Website:** <https://soiltesting.tamu.edu>