Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Madison County

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Homeowner Soil Ph Test Form

Date _____ **Phone** _____

Name _____

Address _____

Soil Location

Lawn, Bare_____ or Established _____
Flower or Vegetable Garden _____
Trees & Shrubs _____
Other _____

The pH scale runs from 0-14; 0-7 is acidic, 7 is neutral, and 7-14 is alkaline. Most plants grow best at a pH of 6.0-7.0. Acid-loving plants such as blueberries, azaleas, etc. are exceptions, preferring a pH of 4.0-5.5. It is worthwhile to note that a difference of 1.0 means a IO-fold increase or decrease in actual acidity.

The soil test which Cooperative Extension does is called a pH or lime test. This test may be useful in diagnosing problems, but disease and chemical contaminants cannot be determined from a pH test.

Agricultural lime in our area usually has about a 75% neutralizing capacity. It dissolves very slowly and so it is best applied in the fall. Hydrated lime acts more quickly, but is very caustic, dangerous to handle, and dissolves so quickly that it can bum plants. Wood ashes are high in calcium and so may be used instead of lime. They only have half the neutralizing capacity of agricultural lime, but shouldn't be used indescrimitely.

Your Soil Test Results

Your soil pH is _____ . If it is higher than 6.4, you should apply no limestone or wood ash.

Gardens/trees: You should apply _____ pounds of limestone per 100 square feet (10' x 10' area).

You should apply _____ pounds of sulfur per 100 square feet.

Lawns: You should apply _____ pounds of limestone per 1000 square feet.

You should apply _____ pounds of sulfur per 1000 square feet.

Fertilizer Recommendations:

Most plants can be grown successfully by having a pH test made, applying lime or sulfur if necessary and also applying fertilizer. We recommend the following rates and schedules. ORGANIC FERTILIZERS (COMPOST, MANURES) ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED, both as a source of nutrients and as soil conditioners. The first number in the fertilizer analysis is always N (for nitrogen), and is the basis for the amounts recommended. The three numbers stand for N-P-K (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium).

Gardens (flower or vegetable). For the first year, apply 5 pounds of 5-10-5 or 5-10-10 or 21/2 pounds of 10-10-10 per 100 sq.ft After the first year, 3-4 pounds of 5-1 0-5 or 5-10-10 or 2 pounds of 10-10-10 per 100 sq. ft. Fertilizer is best applied in the spring, just before planting. ORGANIC FERTILIZERS can be substituted by using 2-3 bushels of composted manure plus 1 pound of bone meal per 100 sq. ft.

Lawns: Best fertilized in fall (September/October) if only done once, using a slow-release fertilizer. Each fall apply 10 pounds of 10- 6-4 per 1000 sq. ft. on established lawns. One-half of this rate can also be used in the spring, although an annual fall fertilization is adequate. NEVER fertilize a lawn in hot, dry weather; beware of tendency to over-fertilize. A highly fertilized lawn is more susceptible to droughts, diseases and insect damage.

Shrubs: Apply 2-3 pounds of 5-10-5 or 5-10-10 or *1-1$^{1/2}$* pounds 10-6-4 or 10-10-10 per 100 sq. ft. This should be applied in spring before July 1 or in the fall during November (slow-release best at this time).

Trees: Up to 3" in diameter, use 2 pounds of 5-10-5 per inch of trunk diameter.
Over 3" in diameter, use 5 pounds of 5-10-5 per inch of trunk diameter.
Fruit trees need specific fertilizer amounts for different types.

This Test Performed By: _____

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SOIL TEST, CALL 684-3001 OR 655-2075.

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