

Soil Sample Collection
UCCE Soil Testing Workshop
11/15/23
Presenter: Arron Wilder

Materials required

1. Clean Spade or shovel
2. Clean Bucket
3. New Zip lock bags and sharpie pen
4. Lab sample form

Notes on collecting soil samples:

1. Collect the soil sample when crops are not being grown
2. Collect samples where fields are similar (same soil type, slope position, soil depth, management, etc) Fields, which are similar in appearance, production and past-management practices, can be grouped into a single sampling unit. Collect separate samples from fields that differ in colour, slope, drainage, past management practices like liming, gypsum application, fertilization, cropping system *etc.*
3. Avoid sampling in furrows, wet spots, areas near trees, compost piles, paths or buildings.
4. Generally, collect sample between 3-4 inches below soil surface. Samples can also be tailored to shallow or deeply rooted crops. Remove woody or undecomposed organic debris from sample.

Collecting soil sample:

1. Divide the field into different homogenous units based on the visual observation
2. Remove the surface litter at the sampling spot.
3. Collect the soil sample using a clean spade.
4. Collect at least 10 to 15 samples from each sampling unit and place in a bucket
5. If auger is not available, make a 'V' shaped cut to a depth of 15 cm in the sampling spot using spade.
6. Homogenize the samples in the bucket and place one sample from the bucket into a zip lock bag. This will be the sample.
7. Label the bag with sample ID, time, date and location
8. Deliver/ship sample to lab