



Guidelines to Taking a Soil Sample

The most important point to remember when taking a soil sample is that any analytical result is only as good as the sample taken.

- For sampling purposes divide the farm into fields or areas of minimum 2 – 4ha and maximum 8ha.
- Take separate samples from areas that differ in soil type, previous cropping history, slope, drainage or persistent poor yields.
- Avoid any unusual spots such as old fences, ditches, drinking troughs, dung or urine patches or where organic manure or lime has been heaped or spilled in the past.
- Do not sample a field for P and K until **3 - 6** months after last application of fertiliser P and K. Where lime has been applied allow a time lag of 2 years before sampling for lime requirements (Not critical).
- Follow a ‘W’ soil sampling pattern to ensure that the sample is representative of the entire field. Ensure that all soil cores are taken to the full 100mm/10cm/4” depth. Place the 20 cores in the soil box / bag to make up the soil sample.
- Write the field number and sample number on the soil box / bag.

Recommended Soil Sampling Pattern:



- Sample every 3 years in intensive farming
- Sample every 4-5 years in less intensive farming