

## Get a Soil Test this Fall

Having your soil tested is good practice at any time of year. If you are concerned about the pH of your soil, fall is the best time for a test. If adjustments are needed, you can act now, allowing time for the amendments to react with the soil before the next growing season.

We recommend doing a soil test every 3-5 years. A comprehensive soil test is a good way to get to know your soil. It is also important when you first cultivate an area for annual crops or before planting perennial crops such as orchards, trees, or grass seeds. In areas where you have been gardening, it may provide answers to why certain plants have shown abnormally slow growth.

For a free pH test, bring samples to the Clackamas County Master Gardeners' Fall into Gardening event on October 12. <https://cmastergardeners.org/fall-into-gardening/>  
Get instructions for taking soil samples at <https://cmastergardeners.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/testing-soil-ph.pdf>



Photo by Sherry Sheng

There are commercial testing labs that provide soil testing services. Be sure to select a test that is designed for gardens, not farms. The company may offer tests with a focus on soil nutrients,

soil health (organic matter), or contaminants. Determine what is important to your site. This OSU publication offers ideas for how to select a service. *How do I test my garden soil?*

<https://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/soil-compost/how-do-i-test-my-garden-soil>

To get started, check out this list of *Analytical Labs Serving Oregon*

<https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/programs/Pesticides/Documents/2020/AnalyticalLabsServingOregon.pdf>

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