



**Instructions for Collecting Soil Samples**

NOTE: Please confirm our lab availability with us **BEFORE** sending us your samples. We accept samples mondays, tuesdays and wednesdays. All samples must arrive at our lab before the end of the day on wednesdays each week. Samples that arrive later than that without prior consent from our lab will not be reviewed.

General tips for accurate results:

* Wash your hands well or put on clean gloves before handling the sample material.
* Only take the samples when it is possible to ship them immediately, the same day.
* Keep the samples out of the sun, and do not let them freeze either, as both of these situations will kill many beneficial organisms. Keep samples in a cool place works best.
* These samples need to reach our lab as soon as possible, it is recommended that these samples are treated as a time sensitive product, with the fastest delivery time frame (Same day is ideal; 48 hours is acceptable)
* Tools required for sampling: un-used sandwich size zipper-type plastic baggies, a soil corer or an apple corer, and a permanent marker.
* Taking 5-10 cores per sample area will result in better representation of the state of soil health in an area than 1-2 cores would.
* As soon as the sample is taken, please write with your marker on the outside of the bag: which sample it is, the date and time. Do not place an identification note on the inside of the bag as this will change the results.
* Please ensure to place samples in a box where they will not be compacted along the way (i.e. cardboard box), and if it will be very hot outside, it is best to insulate the samples as well.

**1. Identify the sample areas:**

There may be various samples to take if there are several different conditions on your land, or any other areas of interest.

 Eg: If part of your lawn is weeds, and another part is dead grass, those would be two separate sample areas. If some of your tomatoes are healthy, and some are not, those would be two sample areas. If part of your empty field is clay, and another is sand, those would be two different sample areas.

**Do the following steps for each different sample area**

**2. Take pictures of the sample area:** Take note of the plants that are present, and include for which plant biology you are interested in sampling.

**3.Take sample cores from 5-10 different randomly selected spots** **within your sample area:**

**Step A: Very important:**

If you are trying to sample for the biology of a particular plant of interest, then you must take sample cores from the root zone of the plant in question.

Eg: If i want to test the biology of my corn, i need to pull sample cores from randomly selected areas where my corn roots will be present. If you just take random samples from anywhere in your corn field but not within corn root zone, we will not be able to see what biology is being grown around your corn roots specifically.

If you are testing for an empty or un-used field, with no particular plant of interest in mind but want to get a sense of the general state of microbial health within field, then you may randomly select any spots in your field.

 **Step B:** In each sample spot, remove any debris or organic matter sitting on top of the soil. The best sample cores are from the root zone of the desired plant. So if the root zone can be located in the first 3-4 inches of the soil, then take the sample from the top of the soil (insert corer into soil, go 3-4 inches down). If the root zone is deeper, start your sample from 4 inches into the soil, take 3-4 inches. If you are sampling for soil around your trees, you must take your samples from mid way between the edge of the canopy and the tree trunk, at the appropriate root zone depth. **It is best to have some root material in every sample.**

**4. Empty those 5-10 cores into a clean bowl or bucket**. Mix the samples together, gently, with your clean hands.

**5. Label sample:** On plastic, zipper close bag, write which sample area the soil is from. Place ~2 cups (250 grams) of that soil mix into the bag. Leave some air space in the bag upon sealing, you want to leave oxygen for your soil organisms. Save on shipping costs and only send the amount of material per sample listed here!

**6. Send your sample**(s) using a carrier that can deliver your sample(s) to our lab in no longer than 3-4 days, but the sooner the better for accuracy. If you are able to send in 24-48 hours, it would be ideal.

**7. Ship to the following address:**

33 Rue Main

North Hatley, Québec

J0B2C0

\*MAKE SURE TO REQUEST ‘NO SIGNATURE REQUIRED UPON ARRIVAL’\*

**8. Send us shipment info:**

When the package has been sent, please send us an e-mail containing the following details:

- the tracking number

- estimated time of arrival

- labeled pictures from sample areas

- plants present in each sample areas

- plants desired in each sample areas

Turn around time: no more than 10 working days; 24 hour express results service available upon request for an extra 25$ per sample. We are not always able to do this so please confirm with our lab before sending us your samples. If we are not able to do so at that point, we will let you know the soonest possible date to do so.

We will send you the results, interpretations by e-mail. Once you receive your e-mailed report, you can contact us if there is a need to discuss the results further or additional interpretation of the report (additional consultation fees apply).

Looking forward to working with you and your soils!

DOCTERRE

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