

BLOSSOM Consulting Services

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“DOING IT RIGHT” THE MINERAL-AUGMENTED ORGANIC WAY *The Only Way to Grow!*

SOIL SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS FOR PROFESSIONAL SOIL ANALYSIS

Warning: It is extremely important that you follow these instructions in taking soil samples and get a sampling that is representative of the site you will be gardening or treating.

General: You can not simply go out and grab a scoop of soil and bring it in. Improper sampling will give you misleading lab results and waste your money. The data and recommendations you receive from the laboratory and from BLOSSOM Consulting will only be as good as the samples sent in for analysis. Late spring, early summer and fall are the best times to have your soil tested, but anytime is O.K. While not required, the lab prefers to have dry (air or solar-dried) soil as opposed to wet soil.

Any sample turned in has to represent a uniform soil type and condition. Since a number of scattered sub-samples are involved, you can not take some from a sandy soil and some from a clayey soil, or some from a low, wet site and some from a hill and expect the averaged results to be useful. Separate tests are required for dissimilar soils or sites. If undecided about whether to test a fertilized or an untreated area, it is generally best to know about the original or untreated ground or else to test both separately.

Tools: To properly take clean, uncontaminated samples, you will need a clean, non-rusted digging tool such as a shovel, spade, trowel or special soil probe. Stainless steel and chrome-plated tools are best. Do not use galvanized metal, brass or other soft metals, or tools with flaking paint. Also needed is a clean knife (stainless steel or chrome), a clean cup, a clean plastic pail, a ball point pen, and a sample bag (or bags), or use a clean zip-lock plastic bag if necessary.

Procedure: Using a map or site drawing, randomly select 10 scattered sub-sampling spots. In gardens you will be taking samples from the top 6 inches. For lawns and pastures sample the top 4 inches. At each spot scrape away any surface debris, plant material, litter, mulch, etc. without removing any soil. Dig out a small hole or wedge about 8 inches deep and set the soil aside. Next, with your shovel, slice down an inch from the sidewall of the hole and then, without removing the slice, cut away all but a center column about an inch wide with a knife and lift it out on the shovel. Cut off all but the top 6 (or 4) inches and slide it into your pail. Take the other 9 sub-samples in the same way, then, using a trowel stir them all together thoroughly. Remove a full cup of the soil mixture and place it in a sample bag, which has been properly labeled and identified. Bring the bag to us along with the questionnaire which you need to fill out as best you can to aid us in advising the lab and for interpreting results to advise you on needed treatments.

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Customer Soil and Fertility Questionnaire

(Please fill out a Questionnaire for each soil test request)

A Free 15 minute consultation to explain the analysis will be given in person or by phone.

WE DO NOT DO SOIL TESTING ANALYSIS FOR POTTING SOILS OR GROWING CANNABIS.

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

General Site Location: _____ County _____

How do you want to receive your reports? _____ (in-person, mail, fax, email)

Address: _____ Zip _____

Email: _____ Fax _____

Total area to be amended: Sq. Feet (Length X Width)

How many years has this site been cultivated? _____

What fertilizers/amendments, organic or synthetic have been used on this site? (Miracle Gro, BLOOM, rock powders, animal or plant meals, commercial NPK blends, etc.) _____

Have applications of Garden Lime, Dolomite Lime, mushroom compost or wood ashes been made in the last 4 years? Yes _____ No _____ Describe (what, when, at what rate, etc.) _____

Drainage Issues:

What is the soil type? Clay _____ Sand _____ Silt _____ Loam _____ Don't Know _____

Does the soil drain quickly? Yes _____ No _____ Not sure _____

Was the site graded and the topsoil replaced? Yes _____ No _____ Describe _____

What types of organic matter (grass clippings, manure, sawdust, table scraps, etc.) have been applied in the past 4 years? _____

Has the site been cover cropped during the winter months? Describe: _____

What do you plan to grow? _____

Are there other points or concerns not covered above? _____

(Our lab tests for levels of Calcium, Magnesium, Potassium, Sodium, Sulfur, Phosphorus, Iron, Boron, Manganese, Copper, Zinc, Aluminum, pH and organic matter. Special testing for other minerals is extra.)

Gary Kline, founder of Black Lake Organic and owner of BLOSSOM Consulting Services has over 42 years of experience in providing assistance for organic gardeners. BLOSSOM Consulting provides professional soil analyses, analysis review, on-site project inspections, site evaluation reports, phone or office consultations, and speaking and lecture presentations. 360-943-5670