

Integrity Soils

272 Racecourse Road, RD2 Waipukurau, New Zealand
Phone: 0274 523 900
Email: nicole@integritysoils.co.nz



Soil Sampling

Soil and plant tissue analyses highlight mineral imbalances that might be affecting the health of pasture or animals that feed on it.

Soil testing takes the guess work out of nutrient management and allows cost effective fertiliser programmes to be produced. Plant tissue tests complement soil tests and allow important trace nutrients to be adjusted for improved animal health.

Collecting a soil sample:

Materials needed:

- ≈ Soil probe (auger) is recommended - some rural supply outlets or soil laboratories are happy to lend you one. Otherwise use a trowel or shovel.
- ≈ Clean bucket for sampling
- ≈ Ziplock bags (1 per sample)
- ≈ Permanent marker pen

Note: The soil results you receive will only be as good as the samples you send in for analysis.

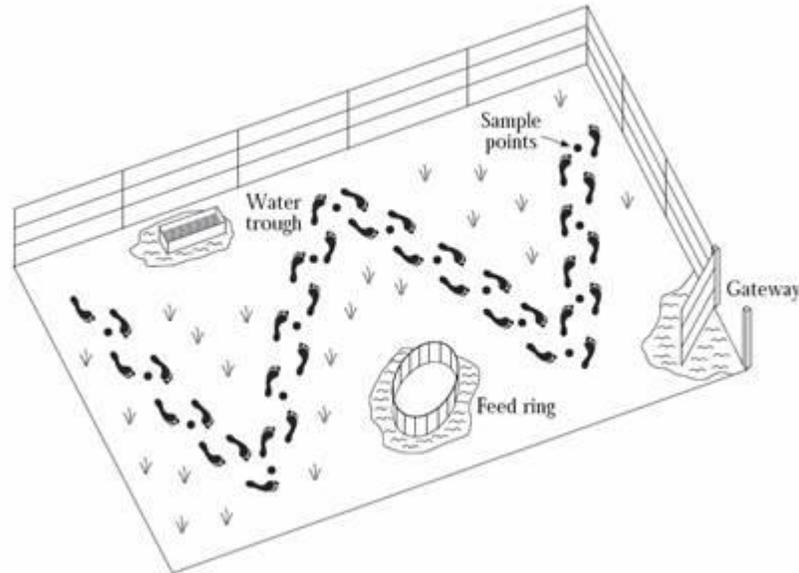
Select 15-30 samples from random areas. To keep your sample as representative of the field as possible avoid field gates, eroded hillsides, water troughs, feed rings etc. Try to avoid taking a sample too soon after fertiliser is applied. It is often useful to walk across the field in a 'W' pattern to aid sampling (see next page).

Scrape the top of the soil with the heel of your boot to remove grasses, organic matter.

Soil Sampling Protocol

If you are not able to obtain a soil probe you can remove samples using a trowel or shovel, by digging a hole 150mm (6 inches) deep. Slide the shovel or trowel down the side of the hole from top to bottom to remove a “slice” of soil from the edge of the hole. You’re sampling from the soil surface to the deepest point in the hole.

Place all the samples together in a clean pail or other container, and mix thoroughly. Remove pebbles and other debris. Permit mixture to dry.



Place one cup of the mixed sample in a sealable plastic bag or other clean, unbreakable container.

Label the container clearly with your name, address, and phone number.

If you have several distinctly different soil types or growing conditions, you may want to take separate soil samples from each of the locations, e.g. the hay fields, garden, limestone hills etc.

Taking a reliable sample

Traces of soil or chemicals (such as drench) on your hands will contaminate test results. Try to avoid skin contact with the sample – this can raise the sodium results. Soil tests are more valuable when collecting trends over time. It is therefore important to repeat soil tests the same time of the year.

GPS measurements or photographs can be used to ensure that samples are taken from consistent sites.