Penn State **Extension**

Don't Guess—Soil Test

Why test your soil?...

- Proper soil fertility is the foundation for plant health.
- Soil pH and nutrient levels can vary greatly from site to site (lawn, flower garden, vegetable garden, etc).
- A $9.00 Penn State soil test will ensure that you apply the proper amount of fertilizer. Your test results may even show that you don't need to add fertilizer!

How to do it...

- Buy a Penn State soil test mailing kit (pre-addressed envelope, instructions, and a soil sample bag) for each area you plan to sample. The kit price also includes the testing fee.
- In the area to be tested, collect 12 to 15 samples (3-4" deep for turf, 6-10" deep for other plants). Mix all the samples together and dry overnight on a clean newspaper. Do not heat.
- Indicate on the form what crop you are growing (ex., turf, vegetable garden, strawberries, etc.). You may pay an additional fee to learn the levels of organic matter in your soil, a good benchmark for beginning gardeners. You will receive soil amendment recommendations within about 2 weeks.
- Take kit/sample to the post office for correct postage to mail to Penn State.

How often should I test?...

Retest the garden's fertility and pH levels each year for several seasons. If reports remain similar, reduce sampling to every three to four years. Nutrient levels and pH gradually change over time; it's important to keep monitoring the soil to keep levels optimal.

PENNSTATE Cooperative Extension College of Agricultural Sciences

An OUTREACH program of the College of Agricultural Sciences

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1. Visit the Penn State Extension Office. Office hours 8:30 AM-4:30 PM weekday. Kit cost is $9 each (cash, check or credit) OR
2. Mail to your home $10. Complete form below and mail into the office. OR
3. Download the order form and instructions at http://www.aasl.psu.edu/SSFT.HTM
4. Send the form, $9 payment, and sample in your own container to the PSU lab.

To Learn More...

Lebanon County Hort Hotline Master Gardeners can answer your questions May through October between the hours of 9 AM—Noon, Monday-Friday.

Penn State Cooperative Extension
2120 Cornwall Road, Ste. 1,
Lebanon, PA 17042
270-4391

extension.psu.edu/lebanon

# Kits	Mailed to Your Home Soil Test Kit - $10 Each	Total Cost
_____	# Soil Test Kits Ordered to be Mailed	$ _____

☐ **Cash or Check** payable to **PSCE Program Fund**

☐ **Visa** ☐ **MasterCard**

Credit Card No.: _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _ - _ _ _ _

Cardholder Name:

Cardholder Signature:

Name:

Mail to Address:

City State Zip

Email Address:

Phone Number: ( ) -

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM & PAYMENT TO:

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