Tips for Getting the Agro-One Soil Test – for NYC Urban Farmers
(How we do it, anyway)

Cornell Cooperative Extension’s go-to soil test is Agro-One by Dairy One – an independent company with links to Cornell, not to be confused with the Cornell Nutrient Analysis Laboratory (CNAL).

Details here: https://dairyone.com/analytical-services/agronomy-services/soil-testing/

Collecting the sample:
- We sample the top 6 inches, collecting samples (aka soil cores) with a soil probe. If you don’t have a soil probe lying around, you can use a trowel, just take care to get representative samples – see the reverse side of this page, especially the middle panel.
- You can mail samples in quart-sized ziploc bags, filled to around 2/3. If sending multiple samples, be sure to label each one! We usually ship in a Priority Mail box (a little over $7 for the small box).

Along with submission form(s), ship to Agro-One, 730 Warren Road, Ithaca NY 14850.

Submission form:
2. Under “Check Only One Soil Test,” select either 833E or 833M (should be same results either way) - $12 per sample
3. For “Plant/Crop Code” use “MVG” (mixed vegetables)
4. If sending multiple samples, each needs its own Form H, and make sure your “Sample ID” matches what you wrote on the actual soil sample.
5. Fill out the rest however you see fit. (It won’t change the actual results.)
6. Write in big, bold letters at the top of the form: “OLD HOMEOWNER FORMAT"

You will automatically get the “new homeowner format” within a week or so, but if you follow Step 6 above, you should also get the “old homeowner format” a week or so after that. (We think the old homeowner format is way better.)

Alternative: If you are impatient like us, as soon as you get the results, you can call or email Dairy One and ask for the old homeowner format, and they will usually email it that same day.

Note on the results: These tests are very useful for the data (pH, OM%, lbs/acre of different nutrients, etc.), but take the “comments” section with a grain of salt. It will often be good advice, but some specific recommendations may not apply to your soil. The same goes for essentially all other soil tests, not just Agro-One; their calculations probably cannot fully account for the unique constructed soils most growers are working with in NYC.

If you have questions about your soil test, that’s what we’re here for! Always feel free to forward me your soil tests, or to ask any other questions before or after sending in your samples:

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Source: https://www.pennington.com/all-products/grass-seed/resources/how-to-take-an-accurate-soil-sample