Nitrate Test

Growers' guide to Wisconsin's crop production

Where can I get more information?

Phone: (715) 387-2233
Madison: 544-2479
8396 Telohomone Dr.
State Soil Testing Lab.

Phone: (608) 262-4450
Madison: 53705-4453
7110 Fruitvale Rd.
soil testing lab

Crop consultants
Retail dealers
County Extension offices

Agricultural extension offices: information on this topic and related topics can be obtained from your county extension office. Information on this topic is also available from your local soil testing lab.

What should I test soil for nutrients?

Nitrate is a nutrient that is used by plants. Over fertilization can result in excess amounts of nitrate, which can be harmful to the environment. Testing your soil for nitrate levels is important to ensure that you are meeting the recommended levels of nitrate in your soil.

Economic benefits

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A tool for measuring nitrogen uptake

Nitrate test

What is the purpose of the nitrate test?

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N fertilizer recommendations can be deduced from your background information on your field’s nutrient needs and growth season. The optimum N fertilizer rate (in lb N/ac) is provided based on the optimum crop yield, which is used to measure the rate needed for maximum yield in your field. This rate is the amount of N fertilizer that maximizes crop yield. The rate is based on the expected N demand, which is estimated from the optimum crop yield and field history.

**Fertilizer Recommendations for Residual N Effects:**
- Optimum N Rate = 0 for soils receiving 0 lb N/acre.
- Optimum N Rate = 2 lb N/acre for soils receiving 1 to 5 lb N/acre.
- Optimum N Rate = 5 lb N/acre for soils receiving more than 5 lb N/acre.
- Optimum N Rate = 10 lb N/acre for soils receiving more than 10 lb N/acre.
- Optimum N Rate = 20 lb N/acre for soils receiving more than 20 lb N/acre.

**Relative Effects of Soil and Production on N Carry-over:**
- High yield, high nitrogen (Nitrogen carry-over) below normal levels.
- Medium yield, normal nitrogen (Nitrogen carry-over) below normal levels.
- Low yield, normal nitrogen (Nitrogen carry-over) below normal levels.
- Below normal yield, below normal nitrogen (Nitrogen carry-over) below normal levels.
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**How and When Should I Apply N Fertilizer?**
- In the spring, before the frost to help ensure soil samples for your fertilizer recommendations are taken before the growing season.
- In the fall, 2 weeks before planting to ensure the fertilizer is available for the growing season.

**When Should I Collect Soil Samples?**
- When a high yield is expected.
- When a low yield is expected.
- When a normal yield is expected.

**How Do My N Fertilizer Recommendations Change?**
- In the spring, before the frost to help ensure soil samples for your fertilizer recommendations are taken before the growing season.
- In the fall, 2 weeks before planting to ensure the fertilizer is available for the growing season.

**How Do I Apply N Fertilizer?**
- In the spring, before the frost to help ensure soil samples for your fertilizer recommendations are taken before the growing season.
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**Where and When Should I Use the Fertilizer?**
- In the spring, before the frost to help ensure soil samples for your fertilizer recommendations are taken before the growing season.
- In the fall, 2 weeks before planting to ensure the fertilizer is available for the growing season.