



George Leigh Minor Plant and Soil Health Center

Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory
University of Connecticut
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UConn
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL
RESOURCES
EXTENSION & PLANT SCIENCE
AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Sampling Vegetables for Plant Analysis

Vegetables

Green beans can be sampled in the summer. Ten of the uppermost recent fully developed trifoliolate leaves are needed.

Field tomatoes are to be sampled during midbloom. Fifteen compound leaves adjacent to the inflorescences are required.

Greenhouse tomatoes can also be tested. Twenty-five mature leaves from new growth should be collected during maturity prior to fruiting.

Peppers can be tested during flowering or fruiting. In both cases, twenty-five mature leaves from new growth are required.

Cabbages can be sampled throughout most of their growing season. Fifteen whole tops can be provided from two to six weeks of age. After two months through maturity, twelve wrapper leaves can be used. At maturity, it is also possible to test using fifteen midribs from wrapper leaves.

Both **Brussels sprouts** and **broccoli** can be tested using twelve mature leaves from new growth. The former should be collected at maturity and the latter during heading.

Cucumbers, **watermelons**, and **muskmelons** can be tested from the appearance of flowers through harvest using twelve of the fifth leaf from the tip. **Cucumbers** can also simply be tested during the summer using fifteen mature leaves from new growth. **Watermelons** can also be tested during the small fruits stage using twelve mature leaves from new growth.

Pumpkins and **zucchini**s can be tested using twelve mature leaves from new growth. The former should be sampled during the summer while the latter should be sampled during maturity prior to fruiting.

Squash can be sampled in the summer. Twelve mature blades from new growth are needed.

General Sampling Instructions

- 1) Sample an average of 10 - 30 plants of one variety from a representative area.
- 2) If there is a plant growth problem, submit a sample from the problem area along with a sample where normal growth is occurring.
- 3) Collect appropriate number of leaves/petioles/clippings per sample. Call us at (860) 486-4274 or go to our website for specific collection information for various plant species not listed on this sheet.
- 4) If plant samples have soil, fertilizer, dust or spray residues, they will need to be cleaned. Try brushing with a soft brush. For persistent residues, wash leaves/petioles with a dilute (phosphate-free) dishwashing detergent in tap or distilled (preferred) water quickly (less than one minute). Rinse well, shake excess water from, and air dry at room temperature on paper towels or other clean, absorbent surface. Do not let plant samples sit in water as nutrients will leach out.
- 5) Place dried leaves in clean paper bags and submit to UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory along with questionnaire and payment. Fresh, rinsed samples may be brought directly to lab or shipped overnight to:

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Additional Information

A **trifoliate leaf** is a leaf made of three leaflets. It bears a resemblance to a ground clover.

An **inflorescence** is a cluster of flowers arranged on a single stem.