

Interpreting your Soil Test Report

When you receive your soil test report you will see:

Soil test values of Phosphorus, Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Iron, Manganese, Copper, Zinc, Boron, Aluminium, and Sulphur, reported in mg/L. These values tell you what are currently in your soil.

Soil test ratings range from Low (L-, L and L+), Moderate (M-, M and M+), High (H-, H and H+) to E (Efficiently high). This tells you the level of nutrient elements for the specific crop. It is based on historical values which show the relationship between the levels of major crop nutrients in the soil and the levels required by the specific crop in order to achieve optimum yields.

pH is the level of soil acidity or alkalinity of the soil. A pH of 7 is neutral, a value greater than 7 is basic and less than 7 is acidic. Soil in Newfoundland is naturally acidic, in a pH range of 4.5-6. Every crop has a required optimal pH, which can vary from 5.0 to 6.5

LR (lime requirement) – The value given on the soil test report for home gardeners is in kilograms per 10 square meters (kg/10 m²) and is the amount required to raise the pH to the level required by the specific crop. By increasing the pH to the optimum level, applied nutrients will be more available to the crop.

Required Applications of Nitrogen (N), Phosphate (P₂O₅), and Potash (K₂O) are based on crop requirements for these nutrients and on the different soil ratings. These nutrients are integral components for plant establishment and growth;

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| Nitrogen | - stimulates root growth and development and uptake of other nutrients
- stimulates plant productivity |
| Phosphorus | - stimulates root formation and growth
- encourages flower development, pollination and seed formation |
| Potassium | - increases plant vigour and resistance to certain diseases
- enhances quality of flowers, fruits and vegetables by improving flavour and colour and by strengthening stems |

Applying too much or too little fertilizer could be detrimental to the crop and the environment.

For more information on interpreting your soil test report, contact the Soil Fertility Specialist at (709) 637-2685