

# Interpreting Your Soil Test Report—For Homeowners

*Targeted to homeowners or producers of crops grown over a small area—units in pounds per 1,000 square feet*

## Step 1: Do you need lime?

The most important information the soil test provides is based on the pH of your soil. If the pH is too low for the crop you are growing, we will recommend an application of lime. This application should come before any fertilizer is added (preferably about 2 months) to allow the liming material to raise the pH to an optimal level for your crop. If your soil sample does not call for a lime recommendation (as in the sample soil test report), move on to the next step.


want to use 13-13-13 fertilizer, which is 13 percent nitrogen. First, convert the percentage of the nitrogen source to a decimal (for example, 13 percent = 0.13). Now, divide into the recommended amount listed on the report:  $1 \div 0.13 = 8$  pounds of 13-13-13 per 1,000 square feet.

Using 13-13-13 would also supply 1 pound of potassium in this example. While the recommendations call for 1.8 pounds per 1,000 square feet in the example (less than the 1 pound provided by triple 13), we do not recommend adding additional 13-13-13.

## Step 2: Calculate the amount of fertilizer required

The nitrogen recommendation in the sample soil test report calls for 1 pound per 1,000 square feet. Suppose you

Calculate the square feet required for your lawn or garden. Then scale the fertilizer recommendation to your area. For example, if your lawn area is 4,000 square feet, you will need four times the recommended amount of fertilizer. If your area is only 100 square feet, divide the total fertilizer required by 10.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™

EXTENSION

Soil Test Report - 0522E6B837

Customer:

Bully

100 University Avenue

Mississippi State, MS 39762

Soil Test Details:

Report Date: 06/15/2022

Recommendations

Crop	Nitrogen (N)	Phos (P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> )	Potash (K <sub>2</sub> O)	Lime
<div>Field: 1</div> <div>Date</div> <div>Sample: 1942</div>				
St. Augustinegrass	May 1	1.0 lbs/1000 sqft	0.0 lbs/1000 sqft	1.8 lbs/1000 sqft
	Jun 1	1.0 lbs/1000 sqft	0.0 lbs/1000 sqft	1.2 lbs/1000 sqft

St. Augustine grass is sensitive to over-fertilization and close mowing. Follow application rates carefully and mow at a height of 2.5 to 3.0 inches. Do not apply fertilizer before the first spring date or after the last summer date shown.

If lime or slag is recommended, it may be applied to dry foliage anytime during the year and watered into the soil. Do not exceed 50 lbs per 1000 sq ft in a single application. If more that 50 lbs per 1000 sq ft is recommended, apply the second application 6 weeks

Name of your sample

Crop code

Lime and fertilizer recommendations

Helpful instructions—please read!

Name of your sample

Crop code

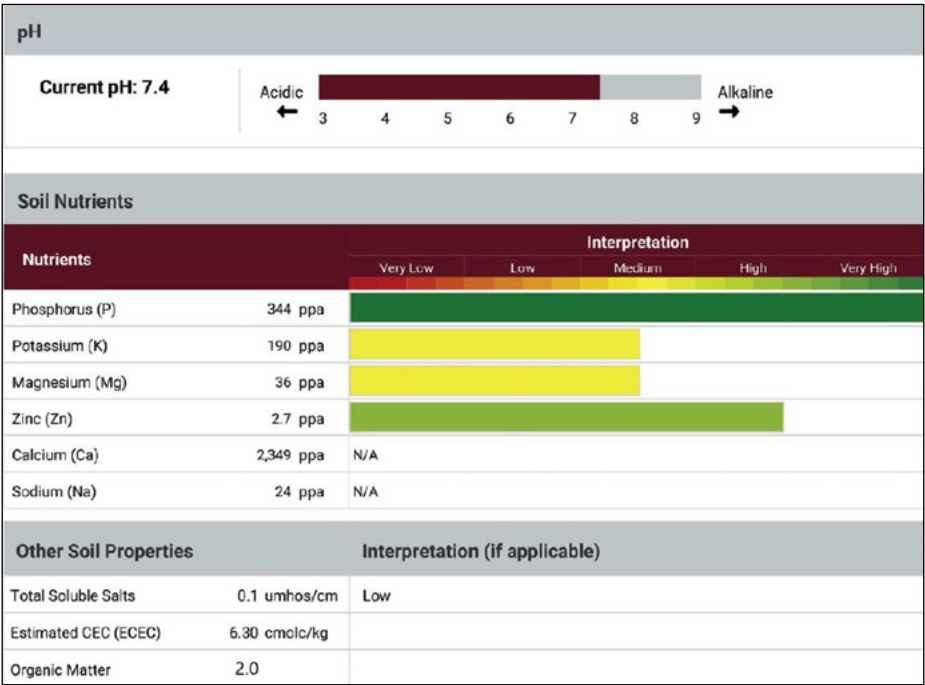
Lime and fertilizer recommendations

Helpful instructions—please read!

# Additional Information

The second page of the soil test report contains additional details about your sample. Units for elements tested are in pounds per acre (ppa). Of particular interest are phosphorus and potassium: green bars indicate additional fertilizer will probably not result in additional plant growth or yield; yellow bars indicate a plant response may or may not occur; and red bars indicate additional fertilizer will likely result in increased plant growth or yield.

What about nitrogen measurements? Plants require specific forms of nitrogen that are tricky to measure in the lab. Additionally, nitrogen is so mobile in the soil, measurement of current values would not be very helpful for predicting a nitrogen recommendation. Therefore, MSU Extension recommendations are based on research.



The information given here is for educational purposes only. References to commercial products, trade names, or suppliers are made with the understanding that no endorsement is implied and that no discrimination against other products or suppliers is intended.

Publication 3825 (POD-01-26)

By Keri Jones, PhD, Laboratory Coordinator, Plant and Soil Sciences.



Copyright 2026 by Mississippi State University. All rights reserved. This publication may be copied and distributed without alteration for nonprofit educational purposes provided that credit is given to the Mississippi State University Extension Service.

Produced by Agricultural Communications.

Mississippi State University is an equal opportunity institution. Discrimination is prohibited in university employment, programs, or activities based on race, color, ethnicity, sex, pregnancy, religion, national origin, disability, age, sexual orientation, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, or any other status to the extent protected by applicable law. Questions about equal opportunity programs or compliance should be directed to the [Office of Civil Rights Compliance](#), 231 Famous Maroon Band Street, P.O. 6044, Mississippi State, MS 39762.

Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director