

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Attention Home Gardeners: Soil Sampling Opportunity with Darke SWCD**

Thanks to a Top of Ohio RC&D grant, Darke SWCD is offering a reduced-rate soil sample analysis for \$5.00 (limit one per household at the reduced rate). There are five important reasons to test your soil.

1. Know your soil. Soil testing is an important diagnostic tool to evaluate nutrient imbalances and understand plant growth.
2. Understand. The most important reason to soil test is to have a basis for intelligent application of fertilizer and lime or sulfur.
3. pH. Testing allows homeowners to adjust soil pH to the optimum range (6.0-7.0), which makes nutrients more readily available for plant growth.
4. Protection of our environment. Avoid contaminants that can enter our surface and ground waters by over-application of phosphorus or nitrogen fertilizers.
5. Cost savings. Why purchase and apply what you don't need? Soil test results provide information about the soil's ability to supply nutrients to plants for adequate growth and are the basis of deciding how much lime or sulfur and fertilizer are needed.

Fall is one of the best times to test your soil. This opportunity also allows participants the chance to walk through their soil analysis report at a one-hour workshop on September 30, 2015 at Shawnee Prairie from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. At this workshop, Kevin Otte will go over the soil report and discuss the important nutrients and ranges to look for. Darke SWCD will touch upon cover crops in your garden to help improve soil health and replenish nutrients for the next growing season.

Stop in at the Darke SWCD office or visit [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com) to pick up some tips for pulling a representative soil sample. Here are a few quick tips when pulling soil samples.

- Remove the top debris from the soil surface before taking the sample.
- Pull samples at a depth of 6-8 inches.
- Collect at least 15 samples covering the entire sampling area.
- Once samples are collected, break up lumps and air dry sample at room temperature.
- When soil is dry, mix well and place in paper bag.

There is a limit of one (1) reduced-rate sample per household. Participants will be able to turn in more than one soil sample at cost, contact the Darke SWCD office for pricing. All sales are final; if you miss the September 22, 2015 deadline to turn in your soil sample, no refunds will be issued. Space is limited for the \$5.00 reduced-rate soil sample cost. This workshop series is a collaborative effort of Darke SWCD and the City of Greenville. Call Darke SWCD at 937-548-1752 or visit our website, [www.darkeswcd.com](http://www.darkeswcd.com), to register today! Space is limited, so register early.