



A FREE GUIDE FOR GROWERS

The Smart Grower's Guide to Fall Soil Sampling

How to lock in better fertility decisions — and a smoother fall — before harvest hits.

WHAT'S INSIDE

1. What a soil test actually buys you
2. Why fall is the right window to sample
3. How to plan and sample your fields right
4. Why booking early pays off
5. A ready-to-use fall sampling checklist



1. Why think about soil now — in the middle of summer?

You're in the thick of the season, so soil sampling is probably the last thing on your mind. But the growers who come out ahead this fall are the ones planning for it right now.

Fall sampling fills up fast, and the decisions that make it worthwhile — which fields, how to sample them, and what to do with the results — get made earlier than most folks realize. This short guide covers why fall is the right window, how to plan it well, and how to take the work off your plate entirely.

2. What a soil test actually buys you

Fertility is your single biggest controllable input cost. A current soil test tells you what each field actually needs — so you match nutrients to the acre instead of applying blanket rates.

Over-apply, you burn money. Under-apply, you cap yield. A good test closes the gap.

A complete fertility analysis gives you the full picture:



PH, Lime & Gypsum

The foundation — if pH is off, every other input works harder for less.



Nitrogen, Phosphorus & Potassium

Levels by field, or by zone if you sample that way.



Organic Matter, CEC, and Base Saturation

How your soil holds and releases nutrients.



Micronutrients

The trace elements that matter for your crops.

3. Why fall is the right window

Spring is busy and unpredictable. Fall gives you a cleaner, more useful window:

Sample after harvest

Before you commit next year's inputs — results arrive in time to plan. **You can till your nutrients into soil right after harvest or before fall NH₃ application.**

Comparable year to year

Consistent fall timing makes your season-to-season trends mean something.

Lead time for Lime and Gypsum

A fall application has all winter to start correcting pH. **Before lime becomes unavailable to quarries running out.**

Get ahead on inputs

Plan fertilizer and lime early for better availability and pricing.

4. Plan it right: the essentials

A soil test is only as good as the sampling behind it. A few fundamentals separate numbers you trust from numbers you second-guess:

- Grid- or zone-sample variable fields. Grid uses a uniform pattern; zones group the field by yield, soil type, or topography — both beat a single composite.
- Keep depth consistent — usually 6 to 8 inches. Inconsistent depth is the most common way results get muddied.
- Pull **10 to 15** cores and skip odd spots
- Match sampling intensity to how variable the field is.
- Turn results into a plan you'll use — numbers without recommendations are just another sheet in the truck.

5. Why booking early pays off

Five reasons the growers who lock in early come out ahead:

1. **Scheduling fills up.** First in line gets sampling timed around your harvest — not squeezed in whenever there's an opening.
2. **Results in hand before input decisions.** Plan your fertility program on real data — and with a guaranteed 3-day turnaround, you're not left waiting.
3. **Lead time for lime.** Booking early means lime can go on with the whole Fall and Winter to work
4. **Smarter fertilizer planning.** Knowing your numbers ahead of buying season puts you in a better spot on availability and rates,
5. **No scramble during harvest.** It's one less thing on your plate when you've got a hundred others.

6. Take the work off your plate

Most labs hand you back a sheet of numbers and leave the rest to you. Corvian Labs' Full-Service Soil Sampling Package covers the whole job: **Complete Project management End to End Service. Single invoice, single point of contact.**



Sample

We coordinate the field sampling — you don't pull a core.



Test

A complete fertility analysis in our lab.



Recommend

Clear, field-ready recommendations — not just numbers. **And VRT Application files for your controller**

3-DAY
TURNAROUND

Pricing is scoped to your operation. We build the package around your acreage and the fields you want sampled, then send a custom quote — so you only pay for what your ground actually needs.

Guaranteed 3-day turnaround once your samples reach the lab.



7. Your fall sampling planning checklist

Work through this before harvest and you'll head into fall with a plan, not a scramble:

- List the fields you want sampled this fall.
- Pull last sampling dates, past results, and yield maps for reference.
- Decide grid or zone sampling for each field.
- Set a consistent sampling depth.
- Map your harvest timeline and your sampling window around it.
- Flag any fields likely to need lime (allow winter lead time).
- Choose your sampling and lab partner.
- Book early to hold your spot.
- Turn your results into a fertility plan before input-buying season.

Ready to lock in your fall sampling?

Tell us about your operation and we'll put together a custom fall sampling plan and quote for your acres — sampling, testing, and fertility recommendations, all handled for you.

[RESERVE MY FALL SAMPLING](#)

labs.corvian.com | (531) 772-6040

This guide shares general soil sampling best practices. Specific recommendations are tailored to your fields after testing.