

**George Leigh Minor Plant & Soil Health Center**  
**Soil Nutrient Analysis Laboratory (SNAL)**  
 University of Connecticut  
 27A Manter Road Unit 4102  
 Storrs, CT, 06269-4102

Email: soiltest@uconn.edu  
 Website: soiltesting.cahnr.uconn.edu



### COMPOST TEST – SUBMISSION FORM

*Compost testing characterizes compost quality and helps identify potential issues before use.*

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Complete this form and submit it with your compost sample(s) and payment. Choose one compost test package for each sample. If you have questions about which test to select, contact SNAL.

Payment	How to receive results?	Notes
MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO: UCONN PLEASE DO NOT SEND CASH AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ ..... Or pay online at: soiltesting.cahnr.uconn.edu Online receipt #:	<input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Mail <input type="checkbox"/> Both <i>(Email is usually fastest.            Check spam/junk for            messages from            soiltest@uconn.edu.)</i>	Compost results are reported on a weight basis. Bulk density is included in the Comprehensive package. For volume-based reporting, contact SNAL.

Main contact	Send an additional copy of the results to (optional)
Name:	Name:
Company/Organization:	Company/Organization:
Street Address:	Street Address:
City, State, ZIP:	City, State, ZIP:
Telephone:	Telephone:
Email:	Email:

**SAMPLES / TESTS REQUESTED (one row per sample, look in the back for detailed test description)**

Sample ID (you create this)	Basic \$40	Intermediate \$65	Comprehensive \$120	Comments (optional)	Lab ID (leave blank)
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**CHAIN OF CUSTODY**

Relinquished by	Date	Time	Received by (lab)	Date / Time

For Lab Use Only

Order#

Check#

Amount(\$)

## COMPOST SAMPLING INSTRUCTIONS

For compost testing, the goal is to send Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab (SNAL) a sample that truly represents the whole pile. Compost can vary a lot within the same windrow or pile, so a single grab sample from one spot is rarely enough.

### Collect a representative composite sample

Plan to build **one composite sample** from multiple subsamples taken from different areas and depths.

- **Sampling locations:** In most cases, collect material from **at least 5 different spots** around the pile or along the windrow (more if the pile is large).
- **Sampling depths:** At each location, take subsamples from **three depths**:
  1. near the surface
  2. midway into the pile
  3. closer to the core (interior)

If you have multiple piles or windrows, **sample them separately** and submit **separate composite samples**.

### Supplies you will need

- Clean auger, soil probe, or spade
- Clean 5-gallon plastic bucket
- Clean plastic tarp (helpful for mixing)
- Sturdy sample container (heavy zip-top freezer bag or wide-mouth plastic bottle), **1–2 quarts capacity**
- Permanent marker for labeling

### Step-by-step

1. **At the first location**, collect about **1 pint** from each of the three depths (surface, mid, core). Put all material into the clean 5-gallon bucket.
2. **Repeat** at each sampling location, adding all subsamples to the same bucket.
3. **Mix thoroughly** to make the material as uniform as possible.
  - Mixing is often easier if you dump the contents onto a clean tarp, mix well, then return it to the bucket.
4. **Take the composite sample** from the well-mixed material.
  - Submit **about 1–2 quarts**, depending on the analyses requested.
5. **Package and label** the sample clearly (sample name/ID, pile or windrow ID, date collected).
6. **Complete the SNAL compost submission form** and include any required payment information as indicated on the form.
7. **Drop off the sample at the lab directly or mail it promptly so the sample arrives quickly** at the following address. Shipping early in the week helps avoid weekend delays.

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### DESCRIPTION OF COMPOST TEST PACKAGES

Test Type	Cost
<b>Compost Basic:</b> pH; electrical conductivity; ammonia and nitrate-N (saturated media extract); water-soluble (plant-available) P, K, Ca, Mg, Cu, Mn, Zn, B (saturated media extract)	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Compost Intermediate:</b> Compost Basic + maturity index	<b>\$65</b>
<b>Compost Comprehensive:</b> pH; electrical conductivity; plant-available (inorganic) N (saturated media extract); water-soluble P, K, Ca, Mg, Cu, Mn, Zn, B (saturated media extract); maturity index; total carbon; total nitrogen; C:N ratio; moisture content; bulk density	<b>\$120</b>