

Basil

Sampling Notes

The agronomic nutritional status of this herb crop is monitored using soil tests and plant analysis. Monitoring regularly is important to help sustain optimum levels and avoid nutritional disorders. If disorders do occur, rapid diagnosis is necessary to assist correction.

Leaf

Sampling Time: 4 - 6 weeks old.

Plant Part: Youngest mature leaf (blade & petiole).

Collect From: -

Quantity per Sample: 20 - 30 leaves.

Recommended Tests: Basic Plant (BP).

Comments: To help diagnose an obvious problem, leaves showing the first signs of the distinctive symptoms should be collected as soon as abnormalities appear. If sampling outside the normal sampling time it is useful to take a second sample of similar, healthy leaves from nearby unaffected plants for analysis as a comparative standard.



Media

Sampling Time: During the growing season.

Plant Part: 2 - 20 cm.

Collect From: The root zone of the plants.

Quantity per Sample: 0.5 - 1 litre.

Recommended Tests: Basic Media (BM).

Comments: Samples are usually taken during the growing season. Remove the top 2 cm of media from the surface, as this often contains a build up of soluble salts as a consequence of surface evaporation of the media solution.

Pumice, which can be regarded as a totally inert media, can be handled in an alternative manner. The sample can be extracted as for the standard media test, but the resulting extract is then analysed as a nutrient solution.

Soil

Sampling Time: Prior to crop establishment.

Core Depth: 15cm.

Collect From: Randomly throughout the area to be planted.

Quantity per Sample: 12 - 20 cores.

Recommended Tests: Basic Soil (BS), Sulphur profile (S), Available Nitrogen (AN)

Comments: If a problem is suspected during the growing season, then a sample should be taken from the rooting zone immediately adjacent to the plant. Collecting a second sample from an unaffected area may help identify the cause of the problem.

Comments

Basil requires a free-draining, nutrient rich soil or growing medium. It also needs warmth and consistent moisture, without water-logging. Regular feeding is required to maintain lush growth.

Soils high in organic matter will support good growth.

Basil is susceptible to deficiencies of nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, magnesium and boron. They have a lesser susceptibility to deficiencies of sulphur, manganese, zinc and copper.

Results for copper, zinc and manganese in leaves sprayed with fungicides will not be reliable due to adhering spray residues on the leaves.

Iron deficiency symptoms may exist even when leaf levels appear satisfactory. This may be due to the presence of physiologically inactive forms of iron within the tissue. Also, soil contamination of leaves growing near the ground may elevate total iron results.

References

Fertiliser recommendation for horticultural crops. HortResearch HortNET, 1997.

Blackmore, L.C; Searle, P.L and Daly, B.K. 1987. Methods for chemical analysis of soils. NZ Soil Bureau Scientific Report 80. NZ Soil Bureau, DSIR.

Scaife, A. and Turner, M. 1983. Diagnosis of mineral disorders in plants. Volume 2, Vegetables. MAFF/ARC London.

Plant Analysis Handbook III. Editors Bryson, G., Mills, H., Sasseville, D., Benton Jones Jr, J., and Barker, A. MicroMacro Publishing Inc, Georgia, USA.

Disclaimer

Normal Range levels shown as histograms in test reports relate specifically to the sampling procedure provided in this crop guide. The Normal Range levels in test reports and Comments provided in this Crop Guide are the most up to date available, but may be altered without notification. Such alterations are implemented immediately in the laboratory histogram reports. It is recommended that a consultant or crop specialist be involved with interpretations and recommendations.
