

## SOIL AND LEAF TESTING FOR TREE CROPS

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Tree crops' includes a diverse range of horticultural production systems. Timber production, nut bearing, fruiting, ornamental, flowering, shelter, forage or soil conservation may be the aims of growing trees.

***Prior to making a commitment to growing a tree crop, the following process is suggested:***

- Examine the proposed growing site for environmental conditions such as seasonal rainfall, winter chilling, summer heat, humidity or shelter. Note soil physical characteristics including drainage, aspect or slope and soil type for the expected root zone of the trees.
- Soil tests for nutrients, pH and organic matter will also provide useful information.
- Compare the requirements of the proposed tree crop with the characteristics of the growing site. If they are significantly different, make an assessment of the practicality and cost of modifying the growing conditions to suit the crop. Be prepared to reconsider either the commitment to the specific tree crop or the growing site.

Soil testing estimates the general suitability of the soil for the crop being grown. Leaf analysis is used to check the actual nutrient status of the crop and is particularly useful regarding nutrients such as Nitrogen, Calcium, Magnesium and trace elements such as Manganese, Zinc, Copper, Boron.

Hill Labs produces Crop Guides for several tree crops which includes sampling instructions for both soil and leaf and general comments on nutrition.

Please contact the laboratory for specific Crop Guides as listed below, or view them on our website [www.hill-labs.co.nz](http://www.hill-labs.co.nz)

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|--------------|-----------------|
| • Apple      | • Nashi         |
| • Apricot    | • Nectarine     |
| • Avocado    | • Olive         |
| • Cherry     | • Orange        |
| • Chestnut   | • Peach         |
| • Citrus     | • Pear          |
| • Feijoa     | • Persimmon     |
| • Grapefruit | • Pinus Radiata |
| • Hazelnut   | • Plum          |
| • Lemon      | • Tamarillo     |
| • Macadamia  | • Walnut        |
| • Mandarin   |                 |

For further information please contact our Agriculture Client Service Managers.