



## HOW TO TAKE SOIL SAMPLES

### A. Select the best time to sample:

The best time is while the crop is still growing so that areas stunted by nematodes can be seen and sampled. These areas may be missed in random sampling. Diagnostic samples may be taken when symptoms are observed. In general, the best time to sample is from June through November. The worst time for detecting root knot nematodes by routine sampling is in late spring just before planting. Survey samples should be taken in the fall following harvest before any fall tillage, when nematode populations are usually high. Samples for detecting the soybean cyst nematode can be taken anytime.

### Diagnostic Samples:

- 1) Take soil and root samples from outer edges of obvious damaged areas in crop row. Highest nematode populations usually occur near plants which exhibit symptoms but are not severely affected. Do not take samples from areas where plants are dead.

### Survey Sample:

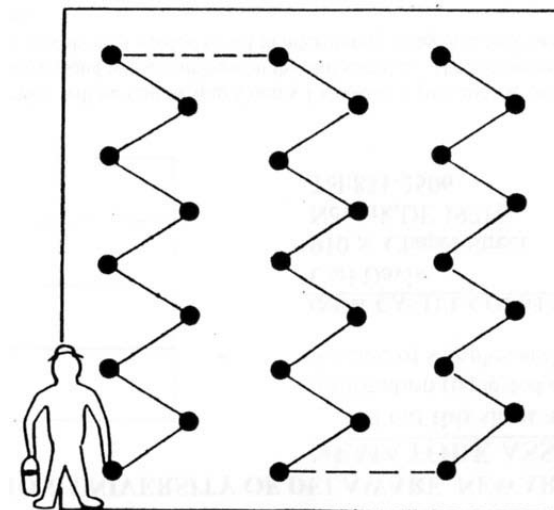
- 2) Take samples at a depth of 8 inches in the row from 20 to 25 locations using a soil probe or spade. Samples should include roots and soil. Mix soil cores in a plastic bucket and immediately place soil in the nematode assay bag purchased from the County Extension Office or a plastic bag. Label bags with field number and location.

Fertility samples can be split for nematode samples if the samples have been taken from the root zone of the previously harvested crop.

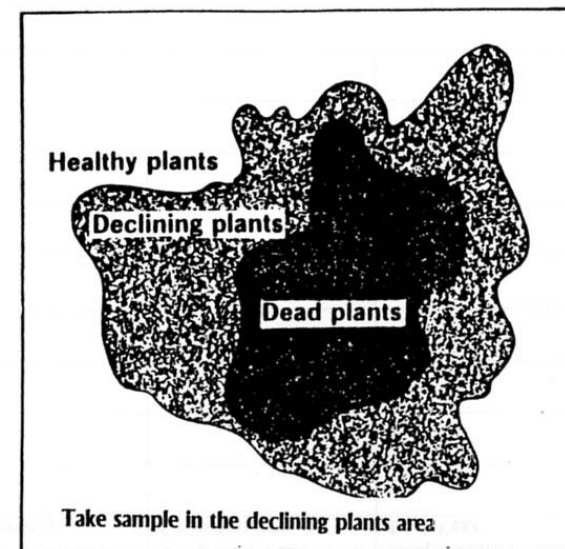
- 3) If possible, take nematode samples from moist soil, neither too wet, too dry, nor frozen.
- 4) Protect samples from freezing high temperature or drying out. Do not add water. Do not drop or throw them around. Handle carefully, they contain living organisms. Samples should not be exposed to the sun or left in a closed automobile on the dashboard. Be sure to fill out information requested on the form and submit with samples. Samples should be submitted in nematode assay soil sample bags which can be purchased from the County Extension office before sampling or when samples are delivered to the County Extension office. **Nematode samples are \$10.00 per sample. Make checks payable to the University of Delaware**
- 5) Samples should be brought to the County Extension office listed on the front of this form during working hours, or samples can be delivered or sent to: Nematode Assay Service, Dept. of Plant & Soil Sciences, 151 Townsend Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19716-2170. Phone (302)831-4865 or (302)831-1390.

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Survey sampling procedure following harvest.



Diagnostic sampling procedure during growing season

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