

Soil Sampling Protocol: Productive vs. Unproductive Areas

Objective:

Compare soil biology between high-performing (productive) and low-performing (unproductive) zones to identify biological differences affecting plant growth.

Step 1: Make a Map

- Sketch or print a simple map of the land.
- Mark productive spots with P1, P2...
- Mark unproductive spots with U1, U2...
- Note landmarks (trees, paths, buildings) for reference.

Step 2: Collect Samples

- Move mulch out of the way to reveal moist soil underneath.
- Take soil cores from the top 3–5 inches of soil (underneath any dry mulch).
- Each core should be about 1/4 cup of soil, aiming to collect an evenly representative amount from each inch of the topsoil layer.
- Take 3 cores within a 3–6 foot radius and combine them into one labeled bag (e.g., 'P1' or 'U1').
- If you don't have a soil corer, a heavy-duty spoon can be used.
- Label the bag clearly with a permanent marker.
- Mark the sample location on your map.

Step 3: Record Notes

- Plant growth (healthy, stunted, weedy, bare)
- Soil feel (wet, dry, compact, loose)
- Color/smell
- Any known history (compost, tillage, flooding, etc.)
- Be sure to label the date and the name or company associated with the sample.

Step 4: Send Samples for Testing

Mail all labeled bags with a copy of your map and notes to:

Everest Holmes
GroZome Biosciences
27 Eagle Rock Cv
Swannanoa, NC 28778