When sampling semi-solid and solid manure in storage, use a shovel or dutch auger to sample from various parts and depths of the pile. Try not to sample from the surface of the pile. Mix up and divide the manure until the remaining quarter is about ½ litre in volume. Place the sample in a wide mouth plastic jar.

It would be beneficial to freeze the sample before shipping, if at all possible.

For more information on manure testing, please contact:

Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture
Agriculture & Food Operations
Laboratory Services
176 College Road
Harlow Institute
Truro, NS B2N 2P3
Tel: (902) 893-6565
Fax: (902) 893-4193
URL: http://novascotia.ca/agri/programs-and-services/lab-services/

Sample drop-off location, or mail to:
Laboratory Services
176 College Road
Harlow Institute
Truro, Nova Scotia
B2N 2P3

Hours of Business:
Monday to Friday from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
Submission forms are available directly from Lab services or online.

Samples received after 3:30 pm will be logged into the system and processed the next business day.

Payment Methods:
We currently accept Visa, MasterCard, Debit, Cash, Cheque or Money Order.

When mailing samples, a cheque or money order made out to the NS Department of Agriculture must accompany your sample(s).

Laboratory Services will conduct an analysis of your manure to let you know your nutrient value.

Livestock manure is a readily available resource of the nutrients and minerals essential for good crop growth. Along with its fertilizer value, manure is also recognized for improving soil physical properties by increasing the organic matter content in the soil. On the down side, the nutrients are a potential environmental and health hazard to ground water and streams.

A sound knowledge of the nutrients in manure is essential to meet the demands of the crop nutrient requirements and eliminate water contamination.
Nutrient Variability

Recent studies in Nova Scotia and other regions of Canada have shown that the nutrient content of manure varies considerably from farm to farm and even within the same storage facility.

Liquid manure storage facilities sampled in Nova Scotia showed appreciable differences in manure nutrient content for various depths of the manure. Mixing of the manure in storage helps to reduce the problem of variability in nutrient content throughout the storage facility.

Table 1 shows the variability of nutrient values for different depths in an unmixed liquid dairy manure lagoon. The variability is amplified in unmixed poultry and swine liquid manure storage facilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depth</th>
<th>Top</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>Bottom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%K2O</td>
<td>5.14</td>
<td>6.05</td>
<td>3.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%P2O5</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%NH4-N</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%N</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Solids</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Nutrient values (dry basis) at different depths in an unmixed liquid dairy lagoon.

How To Take A Manure Sample:

A representative manure sample should, ideally, be taken at the time of spreading. For liquid manure, a sample can be scooped out of several tanker loads and mixed together in a bucket. A wide mouth plastic jar with a volume of one litre should be filled from the bucket.

When sampling solid or semi-solid manure at the time of spreading, take a shovel full from a number of loads and place on a sheet of plywood. Using the shovel, chop the manure and mix thoroughly, then spread out the sample and divide into quarters. Discard three quarters, mix the remainder and again divide into quarters and discard three. Continue until the remaining quarter is about ½ litre in volume and place in a wide mouth plastic jar.

The problem with sampling at the time of spreading is that the analysis of the manure will not be complete until after the spreading is completed. To have an analysis of manure done prior to spreading, a sample must be taken from the manure storage facility.

Liquid manure in storage should be thoroughly mixed before sampling and several dippers full taken from different sections of the storage and mixed in a bucket. A one litre sample should be taken from the bucket.