Directions for taking a soil sample for pH and/or nutrient testing:

1. Use a clean pail and shovel, uncontaminated by pesticides, fertilizers, lime, etc.
2. Small sub-samples (1-10 depending on the size of the plot) should be collected and thoroughly mixed in a pail. A sub-sample consists of a downward slice taken from the side of a hole 4-6 inches deep.
3. Remove large stones but do not handle the soil or sift through it.
4. Mix the sub-samples together and put 1-2 cups of the representative sample of the mixture in a container or a Ziploc-type bag. Label sample with name, address, date and location of sample. This is especially important if you have to leave the sample.
5. If the soil is WET, air dry naturally. DO NOT use artificial heat such as an oven to dry it.
6. NOTE: Areas where you have spread wood ashes (alkaline), lime (alkaline), ground sulfur (acid) or fertilizers in the last four months will be greatly influenced by these materials. Information concerning past cropping, liming and fertilizing must also be included for more accurate analysis. Giving information on the plant(s) and problems you are experiencing is also valuable.
7. Soil tests DO NOT show insect or disease problems.
8. Results of the pH tests will indicate what the grower must do to restore proper soil conditions for optimum plant health.