



Department of Soil and Crop Sciences

Soil, Water, and Plant Testing Laboratory
4780 National Western Drive
Denver, CO 80216
Email: soiltestinglab@colostate.edu

HOW TO COLLECT WATER SAMPLES

In order to get the most accurate results, water samples need to be collected properly. This guide will go over some basics when collecting water samples.

The CSU Soil, Water, and Plant Testing Laboratory (SWPTL) offers water suitability tests for household drinking water, livestock drinking water, and irrigation waters.

Water testing protects the health of people, livestock, and crops and identifies contaminated or polluted waters.

Tools

1. Clean plastic bottles (8 oz. to 16 oz.). The bottle should be durable that seal tightly. Please do not mail samples in **GLASS BOTTLES or PLASTIC BAGS**.
3. Permanent marker
4. Cooler (insulating material) and/or icepacks

Sample Collection

To collect a sample for irrigation, livestock or household drinking water follow these steps:

1. Label all sample bottles with your name and collection date, time, and site.
2. Select a faucet and run the water for five to ten minutes. This flushes out the water that is standing in the plumbing. Samples from lake, streams, and ponds should be taken from below the surface.
3. Rinse the bottle three time with water from the faucet by filling it about one third full, screw the cap and shake the bottle few times. Dump all the water and repeat this procedure two more times to completely rinse the bottle.
4. After rinsing the bottle tree time, fill the bottle to the top and screw the cap tightly to prevent leakage.

5. Refrigerate the sample until you are ready to send (mail) or drop it at the laboratory

Prepare Sample for shipping

1. Fill out submission form
2. Place bottle(s) in a plastic bag
3. Place bottle(s) and submission form in a sturdy box
4. Ship samples with insulating material or an icepack. When shipping samples, collect samples later in the afternoon and ship them the same day via overnight delivery to allow for samples to arrive at the laboratory within 30 hours from collection and within temperature requirements.
5. Seal the box with packing tape and mail to the address in the submission form.

Do not include payment. The results will be emailed once complete. You will receive an invoice with the results. The invoice is payable by check, credit card or through our online payment link.

Drinking Water Test bottles are available at many Colorado State University Extension offices. Bottles may be obtained directly from the laboratory by calling 970 491-5061 or by emailing soiltestinglab@colostate.edu with your name and address. You will be responsible for the shipping values of the bottles.