



Hello!

Thank you for your interest. **Living Soil Essentials** offers assessments of soil, compost, and (depending on your location) compost tea and compost extract. We are currently accepting up to six (6) samples per shipment.

We encourage you to carefully read the following information before arranging for a sample to be sent to our lab.

What's Included in the Assessment

A *Complete Soil Food Web Assessment* includes quantification of all of the following organism groups: actinobacteria, total bacteria, total fungi, oomycetes (disease-causing fungi), protozoa, and nematodes. It also includes the ratio of fungal to bacterial biomass.

Fees

Standard rate: \$100 per sample

Nonprofit rate: \$75 per sample (Note: must be willing to provide tax exemption form upon request).

Payment & Scheduling

Important: Payment must be received before samples are mailed in. Please carefully read the information below and, if you would like to proceed, send us an email with the number of samples that will be sent in, and when the anticipated arrival date is. If the lab has availability to accept your sample(s), an invoice will promptly be issued and sent to you via email. Otherwise we will suggest an alternative date. Once we have received your payment, you will be instructed to mail the samples (see "Shipping Instructions" below).

Sampling Instructions

Please see the attached document, *Sample Collection Protocol*, for instructions on collecting compost and soil samples.

Shipping Instructions

Please print and complete the attached *Microscope Analysis Submission Form* and include it in the package containing your samples.

Each plastic bag containing a sample should be clearly labeled (using permanent ink or a label on the outside of the bag) with a *Sample Name* that matches the *Sample Name* provided on the *Microscope Analysis Submission Form*.

For any single sample, please ensure that you do not fill the bag more than half-way with the material. (Note: to reduce the amount of sample material, you may combine and thoroughly mix the sample material separately, in a sterile container, and then place a smaller amount of the mixture in the sandwich bag). Seal the bag with the air left inside it – do not expel the air from the bag, as this will limit the oxygen available to the biology in the sample, which may result in anaerobic conditions being formed. Please refer to *Sample Collection Protocol* for detailed instructions.

Ideally, please package your sample(s) in a small box or padded envelope to protect it from impact, which may break the seal of the bag, resulting in compaction of the sample. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have additional questions in regard to the process of collecting and/or packaging the sample. **Please note: you are responsible for all costs related to the packaging and shipping of the sample material.**

You may decide on which carrier to use to mail in your sample(s). Generally, the sooner a sample arrives, the more accurate assessment results will be. During cooler months, a 2-3 day arrival window is sufficient for mailing solid samples. For warmer months, we recommend next day delivery. **Important: Please be sure to mail your sample so that it arrives during the weekdays of Monday or Tuesday for 1-2 samples and Wednesday – Saturday for 3-6 samples.** Samples will be processed within 48 hours of receipt. Please see rates for popular carriers below (Ctrl + click):
Thank you!

[FedEx Shipping Rates](#)

[UPS Shipping Rates](#)

[USPS Shipping Rates](#)