CROP GUIDE - Plantain

Sampling Notes

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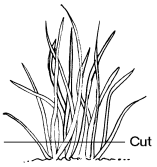
Plantain is often grown in a diverse pasture species mix and has gained favour due to its deep-rooting ability, which allows persistence in summer-dry conditions.

It also has a reputation as a health-giving plant, although there is limited research for this.

Leaf

Sampling Time:	At a vegetative growth stage, usually late spring or autumn flush.
Plant Part	Leaf blades.
Collect From:	Cut at grazing height.
Quantity per Sample:	500g
Recommended Tests:	Basic Plant (BP).
Comments:	To help diagnose an obvious problem, leaves showing the first signs of the distinctive symptoms should be collected as soon as abnormalities appear. If sampling outside the normal sampling time it is useful to take a second sample of similar, healthy leaves from nearby unaffected plants for analysis as a comparative standard.



Soil

Sampling Time:	Prior to crop establishment
Core Depth	15cm
Collect From:	Random sites throughout the sampling area
Quantity per Sample:	12 - 20 cores
Recommended Tests:	Basic Soil (BS), Sulphate Sulphur (SO4), Available Nitrogen (AN)
Comments:	Soil samples are usually collected for analysis prior to planting the crop. If trying to diagnose a problem with crop growth and yield, samples should be collected from the rooting zones of the worst affected areas. In these circumstances, a second sample taken for comparative purposes from the rooting zones of normal areas may be useful.

Comments

The root system of plantain means it can extract nutrients from deeper soil layers than other pasture plants.

Note that fertiliser applied to the soil surface will be taken up by other species preferentially (as shallower-rooted).

Plantain grows naturally over a wide range of soils, but does not tolerate saline or swampy soils.

References

Cornforth, I.S. and Sinclair, A.G. 1984. Fertiliser recommendations for pastures and crops in New Zealand. MAF Publication, Wellington.
Harrington, K.C., Thatcher, A. and Kemp, P.D. Mineral Composition and Nutritive Value of some Common Pasture Weeds. Massey University, Palmerston North, NZ. New Zealand Plant Protection, 59:261-265 (2006).

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