

## 4. SOIL SAMPLING INFORMATION

*Action for valued grasslands, for now and for the future*

### SOIL SAMPLING

Soil sampling is recommended for both enhancement and creation

### HOW TO GO ABOUT TAKING A SOIL SAMPLE

Imagine a "W" or "H" letter shape across the chosen area and take some topsoil from each of the points of the letter. In total you require approximately 0.1 - 0.5 kg of soil. The depth you need to go to depends on the previous and the future use of the field. For enhancement areas (i.e. existing and/or old pasture) you can take samples from just below the surface down to 7.5cm, whilst for creation areas (those subject to regular disturbance and/or arable and leys) the soil should be taken from just below the surface down to 15cm down.

Put the sample in a plastic bag and attach a label with contact details, field number or name of the area and the previous use of the area. If the field contains variable areas, e.g. has very dry and very wet sections, you may need to take and send more than one sample for testing.

### WHAT TEST?

The standard soil test is for texture, pH (acidity/alkalinity) and available phosphate (P) and potassium (K). This test will give an accurate idea of the nutrient status and suitability of the soil and will provide a close match for native seeding. You may also ask for total nitrogen (N) in the soil.

### WHO DOES THE TEST?

Try to find a local company/agent to test your soil. If you would like a service to gather and analyse samples, please try **Farmimage** on 01233 740247 or email [AngelaPhillips@farmimage.co.uk](mailto:AngelaPhillips@farmimage.co.uk)

Others companies offer soil postal services, where you collect the samples and send them in:

**Eurofins** - With online ordering and pre-payment required and tests such as; PUD1B (Routine Soil Analysis for Arable/Grassland £9.60) and PUD1E (Routine Soil Analysis for Non Arable/Grassland & Total Nitrogen £14.40) are available via this website <http://agriculturaltesting.co.uk/samples/soil.html>

**ELAB Ltd** - With a minimum charge of £60, this is a useful service for several samples. Per sample test include; routine pH, P&K and texture (£11+ vat) and total N testing, suitable for some sites (£15 + vat). Contact: The Environmental Lab Ltd, Unit A2, Windmill Rd, St. Leonards on sea, East Sussex TN38 9BY. Tel: 01424 718618. [www.elab-uk.co.uk](http://www.elab-uk.co.uk) and email: [sknight@elab-uk.co.uk](mailto:sknight@elab-uk.co.uk)

Pack your sample(s) in a labelled plastic bag within a padded bag.

### THE RESULTS

A summary of the test results will be sent or emailed to you.

If the soil is found to be acidic - neutral (pH 4-6.5) and has a low nutrient status (below index 2) you can then consider the enhancement or creation of a wildflower meadow with Weald Native Origin Seed (WNOS).

*Prices updated April 2013*

*The Weald Meadows Initiative is a unique partnership between the High Weald Landscape Trust (HWLT), the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Agrifactors and the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), The Nineveh Charitable Trust, Private Donors & Royal Botanic Gardens Kew*