



### Palouse Conservation District

Published by Elizabeth Sebo · May 1, 2023 ·



Soil tests have long been used as a tool to make decisions about fertilizer application in fields across the Palouse. But recently, the newer science of sap testing is being utilized in some areas. So, what exactly is sap testing?

The general idea of sap testing is to sample new and old leaves from multiple plants to analyze the mineral content of the fluids found inside. These results can then be used to identify mineral deficiencies and inform decisions on what fertilizers or other products could be applied to a crop in the spring. Sap analysis is sometimes done by crushing up a whole leaf and analyzing the resulting liquid, or some labs will specifically analyze the pure cellular fluid.

Using methods like sap testing to inform fertilizer applications can help both the environment and the farmer's bottom line by reducing over-fertilization. This could mean fewer nutrients in our water and more money in the bank.

Does sap testing work on the Palouse? That is a question that PCD is hoping to answer, in partnership with three producers, over the next three years with a new Western SARE Professional + Producer grant. We will be comparing crops grown using a fertilizer application schedule advised by both traditional soil tests as well as plant sap analysis to try and figure out if sap testing is a useful tool for growing winter grain crops on the Palouse.



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**Kirsten Pomerantz**

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**Palouse Conservation District**

Hi **Kirsten** - we contract out with a private lab for sap testing. If you have any questions about this program feel free to email Ryan Boylan at RyanB@PalouseCD.org. Thanks!



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