

July

Mulch to prevent blossom-end rot of tomatoes.

If garden soils have adequate moisture and a pH in the range of 6.3 to 6.5, tomatoes are not likely to have blossom-end rot. Although this common problem is largely due to calcium deficiency, fertilization is not usually the answer. Any soil with a pH of 6.3 to 6.5 will contain enough calcium. However, during dry periods, plants cannot take up the calcium that is there. If your soil pH is good, you can optimize calcium availability by managing soil moisture. Make sure your plants get an inch of water each week, but be careful not to overwater! Apply 2 to 4 inches of mulch (pine bark, straw, leaf compost or other organic material) to help the soil retain moisture.

Collect cotton tissue samples.

Collect tissue samples (MRMLs + detached petioles) weekly beginning at early growth (at least by matchhead square or one week before first bloom) and continuing for three to four weeks after first bloom. Follow current NCDA&CS cotton tissue sampling protocol: www.ncagr.gov/agronomi/pdf/14cotton.pdf.

Collect other agronomic samples as needed.

Forages

Note: Forage samples for animal feed analysis should be sent to the NCDA&CS Food & Drug Protection Division. The plant tissue analysis service offered through the NCDA&CS Agronomic Division provides nutrient information relevant to crop fertilization not animal nutrition.

Home & Garden

Take soil samples now to prepare for fall planting projects such as vegetable gardens, tree and shrub installation and renovation/maintenance of cool-season lawns. Remember: 1) Do not wait until fall to submit soil samples for home landscape projects. There is a fee for soil tests in late fall and winter. 2) You can submit your soil sample information online through PALS all year!

Nursery Crops

Collect pour-thru leachate solution samples to monitor pH, electrical conductivity (EC) and nutrient levels.

Tobacco

Collect tissue samples five to ten days before each anticipated leaf harvest to determine ripeness. An appropriate sample consists of 10 to 12 leaves from the appropriate stalk position.