TAKING & SENDING
A SOIL SAMPLE TO KINSEY AG

It has been recognized that a number of attendees who attended Whitmar McConnell's Soil Fertility classes at the recent Cultivate Conference may wish to send a soil sample to Kinsey Ag in USA for analysis and recommendations. The following steps have been written out as a means of trying to simplify the process of sending a soil sample for Kinsey analysis / recommendations. The following steps have been written by those who have gone through this process a number of times and know from experience that the first time one does this it feels a little awkward. These steps should smooth the process for you a little!

Step 1 – contact Kinsey Ag

- email Kinsey Ag at office@kinseyag.com
- request the office staff to please send you the paperwork required for sending a soil sample from Australia
- you should receive in reply the follow PDFs:
    - Soil Submission Form
    - Permit to Receive Soils
    - "Procedure for sending soil samples for analysis from countries outside USA" – on this document is the USDA Restricted Entry label
- What to do with these PDFs is explained further in Step 3 below
- Please note that the office staff will also ask you to make payment using "international wiring" – this can be very difficult and costly to do. The better option is to ring the office staff during their office hours (usually about 6-7am AEST works) and use a credit card to make payment
- Kinsey Ag phone number including country codes is 0011-1-573-683-3880

Step 2 – take soil sample

- take a clean spade, clean container & a new zip lock bag to area to be tested
- push the blade of the spade into the soil to an approximately 6-7 inch depth
- wiggle blade back and forth against the soil creating a compact and firm v-shaped wedge of space in the ground
- carefully remove the spade blade from the ground being careful not to create an avalanche within the v-shape
- now move the blade of the spade backwards along soil surface 1 inch and slide the blade back into the soil to the base of the "v" – again about 6-7 inches in depth
- carefully remove this "1-inch slice" of soil from the ground on the blade of the spade – again being careful not to create any avalanches
- hopefully you will now have a 1-inch thick and 6-inch deep sample of soil
- place this sample in your clean container

- repeat this process 6-8 times across the area of ground being tested
- using clean hands thoroughly mix all the sample in the clean container
- take approximately 1 cup of the soil sample and place in zip lock bag sealing securely
- using masking tape as a label, write a label and affix it to the zip lock bag (don't write directly on the bag) – the label should have the details of your name and the name of the area tested (ie "John Smith, blueberry patch")
- *if this description of taking a sample is difficult to understand then you may like to Google "how to take a soil sample" and read through other descriptions or watch a YouTube demonstration*

Step 3 – packaging the soil sample & paperwork

- take your sealed zip lock bag and put it in another zip lock bag (double bagging) this is a requirement of the USA Customs and if not adhered to may result in your sample being stopped at Customs
- put your double bagged sample in a small box and pack well with packing to ensure minimal movement (don't seal the box yet!)
- print a copy of the Soil Submission Form – fill out in as much detail as possible – place in an envelope labeled "To Kinsey Ag" – place in the box alongside soil sample (this is for Kinsey office staff)
- print a copy of the Permit to Receive Soils – if you want to overwhelm yourself read all the fine print (!!!) otherwise simply fold it up and place in a separate envelope labeled "Permit to Receive Soil enclosed" and place in the box alongside the soil sample (this is for Customs officers)
- seal the box securely now
- print a copy of the "procedure for sending soil samples for analysis from countries outside USA" – specifically you need to cut off at least one of the "USDA Restricted Entry labels" – this label must be well affixed to the outside of the box prior to posting
- Write the following address clearly on the outside of the package – do NOT send the samples to the Kinsey address but ship to Perry Agricultural Laboratory as noted below (*Perry Labs tests the soil and communicates these analysis results to Kinsey who will write the amendment recommendations that get sent to you*):
    - Perry Agricultural Laboratory Inc
      15241 Pike 138
      PO Box 418
      Bowling Green, MO, 63334
- Post & smile!
- It feels like a marathon the first time…but once you've done it once you'll realize how easy it is!!!

Step 4 – a small but important step *** before you amend

- Your soil test will be returned to you via email with the analysis results and amendment recommendations
- It is important to note that many of the recommendations are given in kg/ha. To convert this to grams per square meter simply divide the weight (kg) by 10. For example 5230 kg per hectare is equal to 523 grams per square meter.
- Note that where recommendations, such as some "trace elements" are listed in grams per hectare, the conversion to grams per square metre requires division by 10,000. For example, 525 grams per hectare becomes 0.0525 grams per square meter.
- Of course you will have to figure out how many square meters of ground you are covering and then multiple your "grams per square meter" by the number of square meters of your garden
- Spread the amendments as evenly as possible over this area and dig and water in (*some* of the trace elements are better dissolved in a watering can and spread accordingly)

Ok! Is that all as clear as mud (I mean soil)?!!