

Lead

Lead is not a plant nutrient, but a soil test is available for lead due to concerns about possible health problems from elevated lead levels in soil. High concentrations of lead are most likely in soil near heavily traveled roads and around structures where lead-based paint has peeled away. Even though lead-based paints and leaded gasoline are not presently used to a great extent, lead is very immobile in the soil and will persist for a long time. Most plants do not absorb and accumulate lead to the extent it will be a health hazard. Health concerns from lead are primarily due to direct ingestion of contaminated soil and dust from contaminated soil. This soil and dust may be ingested along with fruits and vegetables grown on contaminated soil due to adherence of soil particles on root crops or from rain splashed on above-ground parts. For this reason, soils that have a lead test result above 300 ppm are not recommended for growing fruit or vegetable crops for consumption. For more information on lead in soils see the University of Minnesota Extension publication FO-02543 *Lead in the Home Garden and Urban Soil Environment*.