Soil PH

Soil PH is an important aspect of turf health. It allows the grass roots the ability to access the many nutrients available in the soil. Soils become acidic from natural processes. In our area, rainfall and soil composition play an important role in acidic soils. PH enhancement products are needed if the PH level of your soil is too low for optimal growth of the turf species present. A Ph of 6 is considered the lowest acceptable value in the northeast.

Classification of soil pH ranges

The United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, formerly Soil Conservation Service classifies soil pH ranges as follows:

Denomination	pH range
Ultra acid	< 3.5
Extremely acid	3.5–4.4
Very strongly acid	4.5–5.0
Strongly acid	5.1–5.5
Moderately acid	5.6–6.0
Slightly acid	6.1–6.5
Neutral	6.6–7.3
Slightly alkaline	7.4–7.8
Moderately alkaline	7.9–8.4
Strongly alkaline	8.5–9.0
Very strongly alkaline	> 9.0

Soil pH is the measure of the sourness or sweetness of a patch of ground. The pH scale commonly in use ranges from 0 to 14, increasing with rising alkalinity and decreasing with rising acidity. Extreme readings in either direction are usually undesirable. If a reading falls on the middle part of that scale (numerically equal to 7), that means the soil is neutral and you most likely will not have trouble growing the majority of plants suitable for your region there (all else being the same).

So basically, the ground in which you garden can fall into any of the following three categories:

1. Acidic soil pH
2. Alkaline soil pH
3. Neutral soil pH

Why Is Soil pH Important?

Now that we have gotten the basic information out of the way, let's dig deeper into what "soil pH" means --that is, what its true significance is to those who garden and landscape.

Soil pH is not, itself a nutrient, but it relates to plant nutrition. That is because it governs the **availability** of nutrients to plants. Particular nutrients that a plant needs can exist in the ground in abundance, but if they are not made available -- due to conditions that are too alkaline, for example -- they will do the plant no good. To be available, the nutrients must be soluble. Soil pH level affects this solubility.