**Determining Soil Texture by the “Feel Method”**

**Texture Classification**
- **C** = Coarse
- **MC** = Moderately Coarse
- **M** = Medium
- **F** = Fine

1. Place approximately one tablespoon of soil in palm. Add water a drop at a time and knead the soil to break down all aggregates. Soil is at the proper consistency when plastic and mobile, like moist putty.

2. Does soil remain in a ball when squeezed?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Add dry soil to soak up water.

3. Is the soil to dry?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Add dry soil to soak up water.

4. Is the soil too wet?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Does soil remain in a ball when squeezed?

5. Does soil make a weak ribbon less than 1” long before breaking?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Does soil make a medium ribbon 1” to 2” long before breaking?

6. Excessively wet a small pinch of soil in palm of hand and rub with forefinger.

7. Does the soil form a ribbon?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Does the soil feel very gritty?

8. Does the soil feel very gritty?
   - **NO**
   - **YES** Does the soil make a strong ribbon 2” or longer before breaking?

9. Excessively wet a small pinch of soil in palm of hand and rub with forefinger.

10. Sandy Loam MC
    - **YES** 0-20%
    - **NO** 0-15% **

11. Sandy Clay Loam MC
    - **YES** 20-35%

12. Silty Clay Loam F
    - **YES** 27-40%

13. Clay Loam F
    - **YES** 27-40%

    - **YES** 7-27%

15. Neither grittiness nor smoothness predominates
    - **YES** 27-40%

16. Loam M
    - **YES** 7-27%

17. Silty Clay F
    - **YES** 40-60%

18. Silty Clay F
    - **YES** 40-60%

19. Clay F
    - **YES** 40-100%

20. Neither grittiness nor smoothness predominates
    - **YES** 0-10% **

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* Sand Particle size should be estimated (very fine, fine, medium, coarse) for these textures. Individual grains of very fine sand are not visible without magnification and there is a gritty feeling to a very small sample ground between the teeth. Some fine sand particles may be just visible. Medium sand particles are easily visible. Examples of sand size descriptions where one size is predominant are; very fine sand, fine sandy loam, loamy coarse sand.

** Cay percentage range.

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**Modified from: Thien, Steven J., Kansas state University, 1979 Jour. Agronomy education.**
POOR RIBBON
LESS THAN 1 INCH

MEDIUM RIBBON
1 TO 2 INCHES LONG

GOOD RIBBON
MORE THAN 2 INCHES LONG