KEY TO SOIL TEXTURE BY FEEL
[Adapted from flow chart by Sieve Thien, 1979, source unknown.]

Begin at the place marked "Start" and follow the flow chart by answering the questions, until you identify the soil sample.

**START**

Place approximately 2 teaspoons of soil in your palm. Add water by drops and knead the soil until it is moldable and feels like moist putty.

Does soil remain in a ball when squeezed?
- **YES**
- **NO**

Add drops to make wetter.

Is soil too dry?
- **YES**
- **NO**

Add dry soil to soak up water.

**SAND**

Place ball of soil between thumb and forefinger. Gently push the soil with thumb, squeezing it upward into a ribbon. Form a ribbon of uniform thickness and width. Allow the ribbon to emerge and extend over forefinger, until it breaks from its own weight. **Does soil form a ribbon?**

- **NO**
- **YES**

Wet a small pinch of soil in palm until it is very wet. Rub soil around with your finger.

**LOAMY SAND**

**HI**

Sandy Loam
- **Does soil feel very gritty?**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

Sandy Clay Loam
- **Does soil feel very gritty?**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

Sandy Clay
- **Does soil feel very gritty?**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

Loam
- **Is soil really neither gritty nor smooth?**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

Silty Loam
- **Does soil feel very smooth?**
  - **YES**

Silty Clay Loam
- **Does soil feel very smooth?**
  - **YES**

Silty Clay
- **Does soil feel very smooth?**
  - **YES**

Clay
- **Is soil really neither gritty nor smooth?**
  - **YES**
  - **NO**

**% SAND**

**LO**

% Clay

**HI**