

Soil Amendment Chart

Remember:

Nitrogen (N): for leafy growth, also forms the "skeleton" of the plant

Phosphorus (P): for root and shoot development, flowering and fruiting

Potassium (K): for all-around plant development and health

Calcium (Ca): for cell reproduction and protein synthesis

| | NPK | Topdressing | Side dressing | How long in soil* | Notes |
|---------------------------|------------|--|---|--------------------------|---|
| Compost | 1:1:1 | Prior to planting 1-3" per 100 sq ft | 1-2" during growing season | 2-12 months | |
| Vegan Mix (N) | 3:2:2 | Yes | Yes | | Contains no animal products |
| Worm Castings (N) | 3:2:2 | Mixed into potting soil-no more than 20% | Diluted to the color of <i>weak tea</i> | | |
| Bone Meal (P) | 3:20:0 | No | Yes | 6-12 months | Works best when soil pH is 6.0-7.0 |
| Rock Phosphate (P) | 0:2:0 | No | Yes | Several months | Also contains calcium |
| Blood Meal (N) | 13:0:0 | Yes | Yes | 3-4 months | Fast acting |
| Kelp Meal (K) | 1:0:3 | Yes | Yes | 6-10 months | Can usually be found with fish emulsion |
| Alfalfa Meal (N) | 3:1:3 | 8# per 100 sq ft | Yes | 3-4 months | |
| Fish Emulsion (N) | 4:1:1 | | Follow directions for diluting | 6-8 months | Fast acting |

Some items can be used in combination with others.

Sidedressing:

- Apply amendments during flowering and fruiting times
- If you have sandy soil, it is very important to side dress additionally throughout the year (the ease of drainage leaches out the nutrients)

Cover Crops:

- Legumes (*fix nitrogen from the air*)
 - Alfalfa
 - Roots can reach from 5-9 feet down
 - Perennial
 - Best nitrogen fixer, but must grow a full yr
 - Plant in spring or late summer, chop down the following spring or fall
 - Fava Beans
 - Annual
 - Sow in spring or summer, turn under in summer or fall
 - Tolerates poor growing conditions
- Grasses
 - Buckwheat
 - Annual
 - Tolerates poor and acidic soils
 - Fast growing, can be turned under in 5-6 weeks
 - Sow anytime after last spring frost until midsummer, turn under when first flowers show
 - Excellent for smothering weeds and breaking up clay soils
 - Attracts beneficial insects

Container gardens: the addition of organic material throughout the growing season is very crucial to healthy plants and substantial yields. The nutrient levels are finite in a container and need to be replaced often.

CompostGal: Consulting, Landscaping & Education

Lori Caldwell

925-922-3504

compostgal@hotmail.com