

Compost Tea

We have the equipment and the technology to produce a biologically concentrated liquid compost extract called 'Compost Tea'. This aerobically 'brewed' tea contains soluble nutrients from the compost, but more importantly, an enormous diversity of bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes are extracted and encouraged to grow to incredibly high numbers over a 24 hour period. This concentrate of living organisms is very perishable, and must be used within 4-6 hours of brewing. And whenever possible, use de-chlorinated water for maximum benefit. Letting a container of tap water stand overnight is all that is needed to de-gas the chlorine. Rainwater can also be collected.

The tea can be applied to the soil, to turf or to the foliage (or around the base) of ornamental plants or fruits and vegetables- all plants in the garden will benefit from compost tea.

What are the benefits?

Only when all the soil food web players (bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes) are present in the right balance do plants achieve their full potential. That is, stress free, pest resistant and productive plants. Do all of these players exist naturally in our soils today? No, not in high enough numbers to do much good. But now with compost tea we can get them back in the soil, or on the leaf surface quickly and conveniently.

Bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes are responsible for making nutrients available to plants. As they feed, reproduce and die they release these nutrients to their host plants.

As each of these groups begins to increase it's own biomass, organic matter increases, soil aggregates begin to form, drainage improves and other beneficial species, like earthworms, begin to appear further improving the soil health.

As beneficial species of microorganisms increase they displace pathogenic species. Less food and less room for these pathogens means fewer problems from these disease causing organisms.

Less fertilizer will be needed as these beneficial microorganisms begin to repopulate the soil.

Because conditions vary from garden to garden, results will also vary. Pesticide and fertilizer residues in soil will adversely effect just applied compost tea. But these incredibly high numbers of organisms will rebound quickly, and begin to do their job.

Talk about a positive impact on the environment. Is this the direction we want to head in? You bet it is. Sounds like a tea-rrific way to garden to us.



Retail Locations

5258 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816
301-656-3311

americanplant.net

7405 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
301-469-7690

Landscape Design

Build | Maintain
301-762-6301

Directions For Applying Compost Tea

Compost tea is a biologically active liquid concentrate that is very perishable. It should be used as soon as possible after bottling. The millions of live microorganisms in the tea use up available oxygen very quickly in the confines of a small container where they can go dormant. Our goal is to put as many *active* organisms as possible back into the soil or onto the leaf surface, so apply the compost tea as soon as you arrive home.

Compost tea is normally applied at the rate of five gallons of concentrate per acre. This rate assumes that the water used for application has been de-chlorinated and is close to brew temperature, 60-70 degrees. Because you'll be using tap water that contains chlorine and is cold, 50-60 degrees, we'll recommend a higher concentration to assure adequate levels of live organisms make it to the soil or onto the leaves.

The standard dilution rate is 4 to 8 ounces of Compost Tea in one gallon of water.

- **1 Quart** of compost tea in a 'Dial 'n Spray' hose-end applicator (one that has not been used for pesticides) set at the 4 ounce per gallon rate applied to a 25'x35' area, or approximately 750-1000 sq. ft. This area can be turf, perennial beds, ground cover, flowering shrubs etc. The tea can be applied to the foliage and soil at the same time, but area of coverage may be reduced.
- **1 Gallon** of compost tea will cover approximately 3000-4000 sq. ft. using the above method, filling the hose-end applicator 4 times.

At the 8 ounce per gallon rate allow half the above coverage.

You can't have too many beneficial organisms in the soil, or on the leaf surface. Use the above rates as a guide. You can use 1 gallon of tea on *less* than 3000-4000 sq. ft., but don't exceed 4000 sq. ft. with 1 gallon. Remember, you want results, so *more* beneficial organisms per sq. ft. are better.

How often to apply-

As a soil drench, we recommended at least 2-3 applications during the growing season. Beneficial organisms don't live as long on the leaf surface, so foliar applications should be made every 10 days during periods of high disease pressure.

Because chlorine is added to tap water to kill bacteria, it's best to de-chlorinate water first by allowing it to stand overnight. Maximum results can be achieved this way, although with a hose-end sprayer this is not practical.



Retail Locations

5258 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20816
301-656-3311

7405 River Road
Bethesda, MD 20817
301-469-7690

Landscape Design

Build | Maintain
301-762-6301

americanplant.net