

Organic Fertilizer

How to Make and Use

To use a complete organic fertilizer in a cost-effective manner, avoid broadcasting. Instead, locate the fertilizer where it will do the most good—directly around the plant. When wetted, organic fertilizer will heat and putrefy rapidly unless dispersed in the soil somewhat, so do not locate it in a concentrated manner in one spot. Below transplants, we recommend mixing fertilizer into about one gallon of soil located directly below the seedling.

Below seeds, we recommend making a 3½-inch deep furrow with a hoe sprinkling complete organic fertilizer in the bottom of the furrow and covering the fertilizer with soil by pushing back into the furrow the ridge located on one side of it, sowing the seeds on top of this soil, and then covering the seeds by pulling back the other ridge on top of them. Used in this economical way, fertilizer, any fertilizer, goes a long way.

Here is a formula for a complete and fairly well-balanced fertilizer. All quantities are in volume, so the items may be scooped out:

4 parts seedmeal or fishmeal
1 part agricultural lime or dolomite
1 part rock phosphate or ½ part bonemeal
½ part kelpmeal

“Seedmeal” means any kind of ground-up seed which is usually a by-product of oil making. Cottonseed, soy, canola, and linseed meals are usually available. Cottonseed is the most inexpensive and it is a particularly easy material to work with—dry and flowing. Fishmeal tends to be odorous. All these meals are high in nitrogen, contain moderate amounts of phosphorus, and are weak in potassium.

Agricultural lime or the more balanced dolomite lime should be finely ground—65 to 100 screen—so they act quickly. Do not use quick lime or slaked lime for fertilizing purposes. Bonemeal and rock phosphate are effective phosphate fertilizers. Bonemeal is faster acting, much more costly, and tends to become lumpy. Kelpmeal adds potassium and all necessary trace elements.

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