

Compost tea is easily made by soaking or steeping compost in water. The resulting compost tea is used for either a foliar application (sprayed on the leaves) or applied to the soil.

We all know that compost is a wonderful addition to soil and helps our gardens grow better. You and your garden plants can benefit even more by using compost tea.

By using compost tea to replace chemical-based fertilizers, pesticides, and fungicides, you can garden safer and be more protective of the environment. Compost tea:

- Increases plant growth
- Provides nutrients to plants and soil
- Provides beneficial organisms
- Helps to suppress diseases
- Replaces toxic garden chemicals



Supplies needed:

- 2 - 5 gallon buckets
- 1 gallon mature compost
- 1 aquarium pump
- 1 gang valve (to divide the air supply into several streams)
- 4 gallons of water
- 3 feet + of aquarium hose
- unsulfured molasses



Attach 3 separate pieces of hose at least 12" long to the gang valve.



Place the gang valve onto the bucket and make sure the hoses reach the bottom of the bucket.



Add your finished compost and make sure the ends of the hoses are covered.



Add the water, filling the bucket to within 6 inches of the top. (If you are using water from a public water source, run the pump and bubble air through the water for at least an hour **before** adding the water to the compost. This allows any chlorine to evaporate. Chlorine can kill beneficial organisms in the tea.)



Add 1 ounce of unsulfured molasses to provide a food source for the beneficial microorganisms.



Turn on the aquarium pump and let the mixture brew for 2-3 days. Stir the brew occasionally to help mix the compost and separate the microorganisms from the solid compost particles.



After brewing the mixture, you need to strain the tea. Use cheesecloth and strain the tea/compost mixture into another bucket. (You can put the compost solids back into the compost pile or in the garden.)

The tea should smell sweet and earthy. If it smells bad, do **not** use it on your plants, but dump the mixture back into your compost pile.



Apply the compost tea to your flower and vegetable plants immediately. The beneficial microbes will begin to die shortly after the air source is removed.



You can sprinkle the compost tea onto the foliage and the soil around each plant. The tea will provide nutrients and an energy boost to your garden plants. You can apply compost tea every two weeks to your garden.