

# PURE PRAIRIE FARM

>>Some garden tips to help you grow healthy vegetables and flowers.<<



Buy your plants early. There is a good selection early in the season. Plants that like heat (tomato, pepper, cucumber, and zucchini) can be put outside during the day but need to be protected at nite. They are usually planted after Memorial Day. Just be ready to protect them if hard weather comes.



After you buy them, pinch off all flowers for the first 30-40 days after they are put in the ground. This forces the plants to develop large roots. Larger roots = larger harvest.



Roots need as much air as they need water. Use aged leaves and aged woodchips to make soft crumbly soil.



Meat and bone meal is a terrific plant food. It is concentrated so it needs to be scratched into the soil or mixed with peat moss or potting soil and then applied on top of the soil. If we do not mix it with something it will attract flies. Feed a handful of bone meal to each plant once a month or maybe every two months.



Molasses is a great starter fertilizer. Mix 1 ounce per gallon of water and apply each week.



Insects and diseases come when plants are hungry and when the roots can't breathe. Well fed plants with roots that can breath have very few troubles. Plants make their own insecticides and fungicides but only when they are well fed.



Plants do not need a lot of food early on... Plants consume 50% of their food between flower and fruit. Once they start flowering and developing fruit they consume enormous amounts of food, especially at the end and this is when most people stop feeding.



Three days before the fruit slips off the vine, plants put the sugars, vitamins and minerals into the fruit. This is an enormous transfer of nutrients right at the end and the soil needs to be well fed to keep up with heavy demand for nutrients.



Sweetness comes from sunshine, flavor comes from minerals.



The mineral that plants need in the greatest quantity is calcium. Cell walls are made of calcium pectate (Jello) and calcium is used to regulate many internal activities.



If plants do not find enough calcium then they look around for other minerals to substitute in its place and this makes bitter flavor. So, bitterness in vegetables and fruits is a calcium deficiency. Broccoli, spinach, kale and cabbage will actually taste sweet if they are grown in high calcium soil.



The calcium's I like to use include a handful of lime (calcium carbonate), gypsum (calcium sulfate), and bone meal (calcium phosphate) continuously throughout the growing season. Stay away from dolomite (calcium/magnesium carbonate). It will make our clay tighter if you can imagine that.



Plants don't have a stomach so the digestion needs to happen in the soil. Keeping the biology up is crucial for good nutrient availability. What do microbes need? 1. Water 2. Warm temperatures 3. Carbs 4. A little nitrogen 5. Air (oxygen) and 6. A high calcium environment.



Be very careful with manure compost (mushroom compost). It is high in ammonia which plants like very much but they are also high in sodium which will cause a lot of disease problems after a few years of use.





30 days after you transplant into the soil, stop pinching the flowers and add this liquid plant food weekly:


2 ounces household ammonia  
2 ounces apple cider vinegar  
1ounce of molasses  
...per gallon of water.

*non-sudring*  
} make plants flower  
- read the label

*applied to soil  
water normally  
1st wk do 2x*

 **Make sure you do this EVERY WEEK!** One ounce of fish fertilizer can also be added if you like. Ammonia and vinegar tells plants to make flowers, vinegar (acetic acid) has extra energy and molasses has carbs and minerals for fuel and food.

 Do NOT use fish fertilizer for nitrogen. Fish fertilizer is best used to stimulate (wake up) the biology in the soil. Most organic growers have burned their plants using fish as a source of nitrogen. Fish fertilizer is high in enzymes which is a microbial stimulant. Add carbs! I like Neptune's Harvest or Drammatic ([www.fishfertilizer.com](http://www.fishfertilizer.com))

 **Juice your weeds!** Weeds are very high in minerals. Put a dozen dandelions, thistle, and other weeds in a large garbage can, fill with water and let it soak. After a few days it will smell fresh and act as a microbial stimulant. After a week, it will smell rank but it is releasing enough nutrients to become an actual fertilizer. After one month it will not have any smell and the nutrients will be in the water. At any stage you can use this water for your plants. They "love" the gentle nutrient bath of this weed tea.

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### Recommended websites:

[www.biozome.com](http://www.biozome.com) Microbes for digesting minerals in the soil. This product is awesome!

[www.biconet.com](http://www.biconet.com) BioControl Network. Organic garden supplies for controlling pests like Japanese Beetles, etc.

[www.tandjenterprises.com](http://www.tandjenterprises.com) The BioVam and Microbe Tea work exceptionally well. Unbelievable photos.

I buy gypsum, lime and bone meal at Menards or at local feed stores.

Happy gardening!



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Still need help? Would you like some personalized advice? Bill is available for private consulting. Please call for details. He is also available to speak to groups and organizations. Call now for availability & rates!

Some sample topics include:

- Organic lawn care
- Organic tree and shrub care
- Organic gardening
- Edible landscaping

Happy Gardening!