

Top Organic Tips

Natural solutions



STINKY PLANT TEA

To make some **liquid manure**, or 'plant tea' to boost your crops, vary amounts of Nitrates (N), Phosphorous (P) and Potassium (K) by using what you can grow or obtain from the following ingredients:

Manure (N), compost (P & N), washing up liquid or water (P), comfrey leaves (K), rinsed and dried sea-weed (mainly K, with N & P), woodash (K), nettles (for balance & iron) and cabbage leaves (helps sulphur metabolism).

Wearing gloves, put these into an open-weave bag or holey stockings and hang in a container of water (like a large bucket) at a ratio of 10:1. Cover and stir every day for about three weeks in summer and six in winter - until the liquid goes black.

Add a cup-full to a bucket of water and apply along root lines after normal watering for a nice drink of wholesome, stinky tea!

CONTROL ODOURS!

Sprinkle some **saw-dust** and **woodash** (in small quantities to avoid neutralising your mix) on the top of your compost or liquid fertiliser to keep nasty fumes at bay.

WIGGLY WAYS

For a speedy and lively composting experience, **start a wormery!** Buy a worm bin and watch your organic waste wiggle into compost.
www.wigglywiggers.co.uk

DETER PESTS . . . with smells!

Rather than using harmful chemicals on your garden to deter pests, a dose of **smelly organic pesticide** will soon send them fleeing.

To make your own:

- *Chop up African marigolds, an artemesia* species (like southernwood), rue*, garlic, chillies* or chilli powder, tomato and comfrey leaves (or any of these you can find).*
- *Add washing up water and cover (you can try adding cooking oil too).*
- *Strain liquid, and then add a little washing up liquid or soap flakes.*

This is your pesticide stock; you can dilute this in varying amounts to deal with pests by splashing on leaves and the base of plants:

Aphids - 1 tbsp in one pint of water

Snails and big beetles – 5 tbsp pint of water

Experiment with amounts between the two for other types of pest.

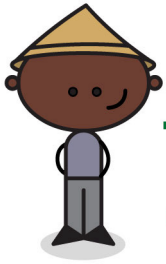
** Some people are strongly allergic to these plants – wear gloves!*

SPECIAL-TEA

For the **solonaceae family** (tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, chillies etc) give them a kick of potassium with their own special tea of rotted comfrey, borage and nettles.

BUTT OUT

Minimise energy use by **saving rain water** in a water butt. Buy one or make your own using a rinsed out farmyard barrel with a tap from a hardware shop.



Top Organic Tips

Organic friends & companions



Some plants help others grow well in a natural way, by deterring pests and being complimentary. If you've got the time and want the best crops, companion plant by using the pointers below, but beware – just like children, plants aren't best friends with everyone!

TOMATOES with French marigolds or chives. . . not next to potatoes or cabbage
Marigolds repel greenfly and blackfly because their scent is offensive to insects and chives keep fungal diseases at bay and discourage aphids.

CARROTS with leeks

Leeks repel carrot fly and carrots repel onion fly and leak moth.

STRAWBERRIES with borage. . . not next to cabbage

Borage attracts bees, accumulates minerals for the compost heap and grows well with strawberries.

LETTUCE with chervil

Chervil helps to keep aphids and ants off lettuce.

PEAS and BEANS with sweetcorn . . . not next to onions

Peas and beans are known for their ability to fix nitrogen - they convert nitrogen so that by leaving the root in the soil this nutrient is effectively re-cycled.

BRASSICAS with onions and tomatoes . . . not next to runner beans or strawberries

POTATOES with beans and marigolds. . . not next to cucumber.

ADD SOME EXTRA. . .

YARROW

Boosts vigour in other plants, as well as accumulating phosphorus, calcium and silica, which are good for the compost heap. It is a good host for hoverflies, ladybirds and predatory wasps that keep aphids at bay.

FOXGLOVES

Accumulate minerals to a high level in the leaves and are generally considered beneficial to all parts of the garden and stimulate the growth of plants.

CORIANDER

Repels aphids and can be made into a spray to repel red spider mite.