

Rays Soil Minute:

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Where there are soils that are depleted of micro organisms there may be situations where it would be advantageous to reintroduce or lift organism numbers quickly. This can then get the natural cycles back up to speed in their ability to make available more nutrients to plants in their vicinity and to help control pests and diseases.

Where it is obvious that the growing plants are not doing well at all, the use of a foliage spray that acts as a tonic to the plants themselves is a good idea. This should help the plant build up its metabolism and produce extra sugars that it can then feed to Mycorrhizal Fungi through its roots. Any spray that hits the soil directly will also boost the soil micro organisms. It has been observed that a response can be seen in the boost to plant sugars in just a few hours when the plant sap is tested with a refractometer and compared to the sap test prior to spraying.

There are a number of very good soil and plant emollients now available that have been developed and enhanced through laboratories. Many contain extracts from Compost made and fermented, even brewed with fish and seaweed extracts, fulvic and humic acid added and concentrated ready to be diluted and sprayed onto your garden. It is always wise to avoid using town water in diluting them --- to get away from the many chemicals that are part of the town water treatment that do have an adverse affect on the contained microbes.

At Good nurseries and on line there are more of these biological concentrates becoming available. They are concentrated and a little goes a long way and they are getting better by the season. Companies such as Neutrog, Nutri-Tech, Nutri-Soil and Seasol are just 4 of the Companies that are doing great research on adding microbiology to their range of products to build up soil and plant health.

There is of course nothing to stop each one of us from extracting and brewing teas from our own compost and herbs in our back yards but they will not be as potent or as broad spectrum with micro organisms as some of those developed in laboratories under intensive research, although they may be a lot cheaper.

Look forward to more in future "Soil Minutes".