



\$0.30

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Homemade liquid fertilisers

Make your own liquid plant food to help your garden grow!

To make a really simple liquid feed that your plants will love, you just need to soak a bunch of stuff in water for a few weeks. It really is that easy - but beware, it can be EXTREMELY stinky! The easiest way is to put the ingredients in a pillowcase or hessian sack, tie it closed and hang the bag in a barrel of water. After a couple of weeks it will start to smell, so best do it away from the house (and neighbour's houses!). It is ready to use any time after about a month. Liquid fertilisers should be the colour of a weak cup of tea when using, so will probably need to be diluted with water. There is a wide range of materials you can use to do make liquid fertilisers, including:

Seaweed

Any seaweed can be used. They variously contain many substances known to improve soil, including minerals and nutrients that are difficult to find from other sources. If you are collecting seaweed from the beach, always leave plenty behind - there are many beach creatures that need it too! Go collecting after a storm, when there is usually plenty freshly washed up. You don't need to rinse it, just chuck it in a barrel of water. *Seaweed is probably the best liquid fertiliser you can make.*

Animal manure

Only use manure from vegetarian animals ('herbivores'): cow, sheep, horse, alpaca, rabbit and chicken all make great liquid brews (but chicken poo is particularly smelly, and I know, they aren't vegetarians!). Animal manure is an especially abundant source of nitrogen - great for leafy plant growth.

Weeds

Yes, it's true - any weeds you pull out of your garden can be made into liquid fertiliser. It's actually a great way to make sure that all the goodness the weeds are taking from the garden gets back to where you want it! It is a particularly good way to get rid of 'problem' weeds like bindweed (*Convolvulus*), *Tradescantia* (wandering willy) and couch / cooch / twitch grasses that you don't want to regrow in your compost. Leaving them submerged in water for a few months will kill them and release their nutrients for you to give to your preferred plants.

Perennial plants

Stinging nettles and comfrey are often grown specifically to make liquid fertiliser. They can be cut many times over summer and regrow vigorously.

Compost

A really simple way to make liquid compost is to just put good compost in water, stir it, strain it and water your plants. Aerated Compost Tea (ACT) is made by using a fish tank bubbler and pumping oxygen through a mixture of good compost, molasses and seaweed meal - this feeds up the beneficial microorganisms in the compost and makes their populations explode! The resulting liquid is considered by many to be one of the most effective fertilisers you can put on your garden.