

Garden Soil Preparation



Soils

- Soil Preparation
- Cover Crops
- Composting
- Vermiculture



Soil Preparation

- Test
- Loosen and sift
- Build



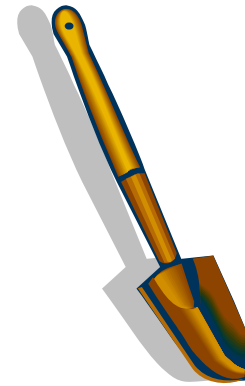
Test

- Estimated pH range of “greatest” availability of elements:
 - 6.0 – 8.0: Nitrogen
 - 6.5 – 8.0: Phosphorous
 - 6.0 – 10.0: Potassium, Sulfur
 - 6.5 – 9.0: Calcium, Magnesium
 - 6.5 – 10.0: Molybdenum (Don’t ask me, I can’t even say it)
 - 5.0 – 7.0: Manganese, Boron, Copper, Zinc
 - Below 6.5: Iron



Loosen and Sift

- Remove grass and weeds
- Double dig
- Sift out rock



Build

Plants need

- **Nitrogen:** leaf growth, fruit set
- **Phosphorous:** root system, bright flowers, fruit development and yield
- **Potassium:** essential for cell division and strong stems
- **Trace Minerals:** encourage strong, healthy plants



Organic Amendments

- Alfalfa meal
- Blood meal
- Bone meal
- Compost
- Cottonseed meal
- Feather meal
- Greensand
- Leaf mold
- Manures: poultry, sheep, goat, cow, rabbit
- Rock phosphate
- Sulfur



Cover Crops



Cool Season Cover Crop and Green Manure

- Plant combination of hairy vetch (a legume) and cereal rye in the fall (October)
- Inoculate vetch seeds with appropriate inoculum (seed catalogs have it)
- Mow and turn into soil 3-4 weeks before planting



Cover Crop in April



Cereal rye and hairy vetch cover crop



**Nodules
formed by
Rhizobium**

Questions????

