

Soil Makes the Big Difference In Gardening

Ask a successful gardener what his secret is, and nine times out of ten he'll tell you it's the soil. With a good soil, you can make most anything grow. Without it, you can water and feed, cultivate and weed until you're blue in the face and results are never what they should be.

The matter of soil building then becomes the first step toward acquiring a green thumb, and once it is attended to, you know you are headed in the right direction.

Following are some tips from the California Association of Nurserymen on the subject of improving your garden soil. More detailed directions can be learned from talking to a local C.A.N. member nurseryman direct.

Of first importance, a gardener should consider soil improvement as a long-range investment. What he puts into his soil at the start will return him rich dividends for many years to come. Hence, the cardinal rule: Don't skimp on materials and don't do a half-way job.

gradient of good garden soil is organic material, or humus. This cure-all item loosens heavy clay soils and bulks up thin, sandy soils. California lands are often deficient in humus material because our dry, hot summers tend to burn up organic matter. Soil management consists of adding humus and keeping it in good condition with adequate irrigation. Farmers often build humus by planting a cover crop and then turning it under to decompose. Home gardeners can take more direct steps. Because their soil area is small, they can indulge in humus materials that would simply be too expensive for the farmer.

What are these materials? Nothing mysterious, at all. Humus building materials are simply such familiar things as manure and peat moss, leaf mold, wood shavings or sawdust and compost, which you can make yourself by letting leaves and clippings decompose in an out-of-the-way corner. We add them copiously at the start and re-supply them from time to time in future years. As they break down in the soil, they become alive with bacteria which in turn make valuable ingredients available to plant life.

In sandy soils, humus not only bulks the soil up, but it adds the missing necessities of plant life. In adobe

soils, humus serves to cure compaction and release imprisoned nutrients in the soil, making them readily available to hungry root systems.

This brings up another point—the fact that adobe soils are not necessarily bad. On the contrary, they are often rich in plant foods which need only to be released from the binding force of the clay. And in such cases, the gardener can call on two modern products

or by-products of chemistry which our grandparents never heard of. These are vermiculture and chemical soil conditioners.

Chemical Conditioners
Vermiculture is a fluffy material which has absolutely no value other than its amazing ability to retain moisture and to loosen the soil. The chemical soil conditioners, of which several are on the market, will help to keep soil loose and tillable. You first have to loosen

it, though. You can't just add the conditioner to a compacted soil and expect a miracle.

The C.A.N. suggests using these inert materials along with organic, humus-building manure, peat or whatever you choose in this line to improve adobe or clay soils. Humus building materials alone will suffice for sandy soils, though vermiculture will help them to retain moisture.

Except for adding fer-

tilizer, the above steps are all you need to insure a soil that will grow anything. Your C.A.N. nurseryman can recommend the right fertilizer.

PRINCIPLES

It is impossible to enslave mentally or socially a Bible reading people. The principles of the Bible are the ground-work of human freedom.

—Horace Greeley

Loans Totalling \$2,486,150 Made In Torrance

Home loans totalling \$2,486,150 were made to residents of this area during August through the Torrance branch office of Glendale Federal Savings and Loan Association, Charles Cederlof, GFS assistant

vice president and local manager, announced.

Cederlof said loans made during the month by all 13 GFS offices in Southern California, to persons buying, refinancing or remodeling homes, totaled \$14,046,950.

Glendale Federal, with assets as of Aug. 31, of \$578,900,097, is the nation's third largest federally chartered savings and loan association.

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