

The Soil Story



Good soil that has developed over eons without disturbance is endowed by nature with the perfect balance of organisms. These organisms create a loose, aerated soil with excellent water holding capacity. Plants in these soils have roots that are able to go deep. Their nutrient and water uptake is enhanced by the bacteria and fungal hyphae associated with the roots. The balance of organisms keeps diseases in check. The health of these plants enables them to resist pests and diseases as well.

Unfortunately we rarely see such perfectly developed soils because of our necessity to disturb them through tilling, clearing, construction, toxic chemicals, etc. The resulting dead soils tend to compact and become anaerobic. Without the organisms that cycle nutrients to the plants, health of the plants suffers.

We think we have to take over the functions Mother Nature used to do. So we try to get nutrients to the plants by giving them copious quantities of chemical fertilizer. Then when pests and diseases attack, we fight them off with pesticides, fungicides, and bactericides. Our plants are now totally dependant upon our inputs to survive.

These organism-impoverished soils just happen to be a competitive niche for weeds. Therefore weed eradication is another function we take over with herbicides, hard work, or soil killing plastic. Continued applications of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides create a toxic environment for earthworms, fungi, bacteria, and beneficial nematodes through radical changes in pH and the buildup of toxic salts and other compounds (i.e. heavy metals).

As with most dependencies, it is difficult to stop. Going “cold turkey” won’t work. Do you know how many years it would take to get the soil back in balance on its own?



Are your plants junkies?

Fortunately in the last few years we have learned a lot about what makes a good soil for healthy plants, and how to create a tool to return soil to a healthy balance. It is now possible to add back the diverse species of organisms needed to get the soil back into health with *I'm Alive!* Premium Aerated Compost Tea. *I'm Alive!* Premium Aerated Compost Tea is made by taking properly made compost (making sure it has the appropriate levels and diversity of beneficial organisms) and brewing it aerobically to produce a liquid extraction of beneficial organisms. When *I'm Alive!* Premium Aerated Compost Tea is applied to the soil, the organisms will begin to establish themselves. The organisms in the soil begin to clump the soil into discreet particles. The result of this clumping is an increase in air channels along with an increase in the capillary action that draws water into the soil and retains it. With each addition of *I'm Alive!* Premium Aerated Compost Tea, more organisms

are able to establish themselves, and the deeper the good soil structure is able to go. Once a good microorganism population is established, roots are better able to penetrate the soil and higher organisms such as earthworms find the food and structure necessary to live. Plants in these happy soils are healthy. They have their own immune system working properly and they can resist disease. They are able to get the nutrients they need from the soil without heavy fertilizing.

I'm Alive! Premium Aerated Compost Tea is also beneficial to apply to the leaves of plants. The benefit of doing this is multiple.

1. Organisms coat the leaves and competitively prevent an entry for pathogens.
2. Some beneficial organisms actually consume pathogens or kill them with their own antibiotic excretions.
3. Nutrients in the tea help the plant to “toughen up” and resist pests.

Now we can step back and let Mother Nature do the work for us.

Instead of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides we can have **“mothernatureonoursides”**.

Landscapes will be lush, green, and safe for children and pets. And you can feel good knowing that you are doing the right thing for your family and the environment.

Willamette Organics makes *I'm Alive!* Premium Aerated Compost Tea. Every lot is microscopically examined to make sure it has the right levels of beneficial organisms.

