

# Compost Tea and Vegetable Gardening

The Best Tea for Your Veggies

First Edition



*David Dittmar*

## Compost Tea and Vegetable Gardens

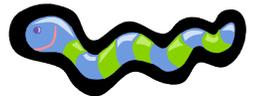
Compost tea can be one of the greatest tools in your gardening toolbox, especially when it comes to growing healthy, nutrient-dense vegetables. For some of the basics on brewing a great tea, please visit our [making compost tea](#) page.

### Vegetables Love Bacteria

Vegetables, like most annual plants, love bacterial-dominated soils. Don't get us wrong, they still contain some fungi, but the ratio of bacteria to fungi definitely favors the bacteria.

By increasing the bacteria in your vegetable garden soils, you will naturally decrease the compaction (that's right, no more rototilling); increase organic matter (your soils will hold more moisture, thus less watering needed on your part); and increase nutrient-availability to your vegetables (more microbes means more nutrient cycling – e.g. more calcium and nitrate availability). All of these incredible gardening feats can be accomplished by paying attention to your microbes in your soils, and treating them accordingly.

Note – The more worms in your garden, the more likely your soils are bacterial-dominated; that's because worms feed on the bacteria in your soils.



### How to Increase the Bacteria in Your Garden

1. Apply compost tea as a soil drench – Once you brew your bacterial-dominated compost tea (see easy recipe below), dilute it accordingly, and dump it all over the soil in which your vegetables are growing.
2. Apply compost tea as a foliar spray – Brew your bacterial-dominated tea, dilute it accordingly, strain it into a sprayer (see strainer details on our [how to brew compost tea](#) page), and apply it directly onto your vegetable's leaves (top and bottom – you want at least 70-80% coverage).
3. Mulch your vegetable gardens – Use green mulches (e.g. fresh grass clippings) to cover the soil in your vegetable gardens.

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### Compost Tea Recipe for Vegetables

The following quantities are for a 5-gallon compost tea brewer.

Before starting your brew, mix the following ingredients in your 5-gallon bucket:

- 3 tablespoons of unsulphured blackstrap molasses
- 2 tablespoons liquid kelp
- 3 handfuls of vermicompost (worm castings)
- ½ tablespoon of Recharge© (our new remineralizing product)



Apply this compost tea 1-2x/month throughout the growing season. This tea can be applied as a foliar spray or soil drench.

### Another Microbial Secret for Healthier Vegetables

Another great way to ensure your vegetable garden gets off to a great start, is to inoculate your seeds and seedlings before placing them in the soil.

The easiest way to accomplish this with your seeds is to roll them in endomycorrhizal fungi spores before planting. The best way to accomplish this with your seedlings/transplants is to coat their roots in endomycorrhizal fungi spores before planting them. If you're planting a lot of vegetables at once, you can put some of the spores in water, and then dip the base of your transplants in them prior to planting. If using this last technique, try adding a small amount (1/2 teaspoon) of liquid kelp to the water as well.

*If you have any compost tea questions, please [write to us](#). And remember...we can't become the Web's biggest tribe of compost enthusiasts without your help, so please visit us again soon.*