

San Pasqual Valley Soils' Guidelines for Using Our Manure-based Valley's Best Compost

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For thousands of years, animal-based manures were widely used as the primary source for fertilizing cultivated crops for both human or animal consumption. Cow manure particularly was valued as an ideal source for naturally derived plant nutrients and for regenerating soils following harvest and prior to planting the next crop. San Pasqual Valley Soils Valley's Best Compost is unique among all area composts for being the only OMRI (Organic Materials Review Institute) listed product available for use in certified organic operations under the USDA National Organic Program. This dairy manure-based compost is produced by San Pasqual Valley Soils locally and made available both in bulk and in bags. Used widely by both professional organic vegetable growers, landscape contractors and turf managers in San Diego county, it is also popular with home gardeners wanting to increase the nutrient and biological activity of their soils with a mature manure that is safe to use without the fear of unwanted bacterial contaminants or unpleasant odors. The ability of thermophilic produced manure compost to add billions of beneficial bacteria to the soil while removing the risk of pathogen exposure to those using it, make Valley's Best an exceptional soil amendment and value with few equals. It is a source of bio-available organic Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potassium that is slowly released for optimum plant root absorption while also increasing the water holding capacity, physical structure and microbial health of the soil. So where and how should one best use this valuable resource? Below are a few well documented uses for Valley's Best Compost to assure growing success.

Turf Establishment & Top-dressing: Nothing compares for delivering dramatic results with cow manure compost than its use to both establish new turf and rejuvenate and maintain established turfgrass by enhancing soil water holding capacity, microbial health and the soil and turf nutritional profile. See link below for a time-lapsed video of how a manure-based compost top-dress application (approximately ¼" - ½" depth) yielded dramatic results to a California homeowner's lawn after only 7 days.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VKICbkbjcnE>).



Local landscape contractors also report excellent results when blending 2 parts of Valley's Best Compost + 3 parts of our Planter's Blend Compost (our landscape trimmings compost) at a depth of 3" to soil surface and incorporating it to a 3" depth prior to laying sod or seeding new turfgrass. Landscapers have commented that this application continues to feed the developing turfgrass for months with excellent root and turfgrass establishment.

Vegetable and Flower Beds: Apply 1-2" of Valley's Best Compost to the soil surface of a cultivated bed and incorporate to a 6" depth. Because of the wide variety of plant species available for planting and their variable response to salt levels in soil, it is advisable to water the compost treated beds thoroughly 2 – 3 times over a minimum 1-2 week period prior to planting to allow the soil to mellow and the compost to further cure and stabilize within the new soil environment. This will minimize any damage to salt sensitive plants and their root system.

Trees, Shrubs and Vines: For both new and established plantings, apply Valley's Best as a surface application at a minimum depth of ½" within the dripline around the base of the plant prior to applying a landscape mulch and water thoroughly. Apply annually as a maintenance practice.

The above are examples of how to apply and optimize the use of manure-based compost soil amendments like Valley's Best. You may also considering adding a supplemental source of nitrogen fertilizer for plants that require higher levels of this nutrient for optimum growth. For example corn has a higher requirement for nitrogen than a crop like lettuce. As you develop more experience and feedback from the use of Valley's Best Compost for your unique growing conditions and plant varieties, you will learn what levels and cultural practices provide the best results. Happy Gardening!