Soil Drench Recipe

Give Your Soil a Microbial Boost

Ingredients:

A handful of local soil, ideally from an undisturbed forest floor. Sweep away some of the more recent leaves to get to the crumbly soil beneath

One medium potato, boiled until very soft and cooled

A 15L bucket of rainwater (or, in a pinch, tap water that has been allowed to stand for 24 hours)

1 tbsp salt (non-iodised, like sea salt flakes or crystals rather than table salt)

Method:

Make in Spring through to Autumn

1. Put the salt in a little warm water (the water that you used to boil your potato will work fine) . Stir, and once dissolved, add to your bucket of water.
2. Use a mesh bag (one of those dahlia storage bags is great) and put your soil into it, then drop it into the bucket, maybe with a stone or two inside the bag to weigh it down.
   If you're not a purist/you don't mind a sludgy bit at the bottom of the bucket, you can just put the soil straight into the bucket.
3. Squash the potato with your hand or a fork and add it straight into the bucket, swish around a bit, and swish the compost bag too.
4. Leave for about 24 hours, and up to 6 days, depending on the ambient temperature. [The handful of soil contains microbes which feed on the starch in the potato. After the microbes have fed and multiplied, the bucket will start to look foamy.] **When there are bubbles across the whole surface of the water, it's ready to use.**
5. Once fully foamy, use it straight away. Put about 500ml of the drench in a watering can, top up with more rainwater
6. Water your bed before you use the soil drench - the microbes will only survive in a moist environment so this is worth doing
7. Water with the soil drench
8. If it's a sunny day, water again with a hose a couple of hours later to keep the environment moist
9. Repeat a couple of times a year… or as you feel it's needed!

History:

This is a recipe from 'Korean Natural Farming', an organic, regenerative farming method developed in the 1960s by Master Cho. Cho grew up using natural farming practices, which he combined with practices he observed on farms in Japan.

KNF focusses on using local, indigenous microorganisms to create self-reliant and low-cost farms that work with nature.