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## **BEST AMENDMENTS FOR NORTH TEXAS SOIL**

**Alfalfa Meal** - Provides many nutritional benefits not only for plant use, but for soil organisms as well. One very important ingredient is tricontanol, a powerful plant growth regulator. Alfalfa is very high in vitamins, plus N-P-K-Ca, Mg, and other valuable minerals. Use at 25 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Bat Guano** - A natural, all-purpose fertilizer containing nitrogen and lots of trace elements. It has natural fungicidal qualities. Excellent source of nitrogen. Apply 10 - 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Blood Meal** - Organic source of nitrogen and phosphorus. Good to use as a mix with cottonseed meal. Apply 10 - 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Compost** - Can be made at home or purchased ready-to-use. Back to Earth 100% Composted Cotton Burrs is ideal to use for amending clay soils. Cotton burrs produce humic acid as they decompose, which helps to break up clay soils. **Compost provides a carbon energy source for beneficial soil microorganisms.**

**Compost Tea** - Compost tea added to your garden soil will introduce beneficial microbial life to your garden.

**Covington's Soil Builder** - Three great soil amendments in one convenient application. Covington's Soil Builder contains **Back to Earth Composted Cotton Burrs, Expanded Shale** and one pound of **Texas Greensand**. Use in all newly prepared landscape and vegetable beds, and to top dress or replenish depleted soils in all parts of the landscape. **Highly recommended.**

**Earthworm Castings** - An effective organic fertilizer that is high in bacteria, calcium, iron, magnesium and sulfur, and contains over 60 trace minerals. Earthworm castings are great to add to the soil in container plantings and when preparing vegetable garden beds.

**Coffee Grounds** - An excellent natural fertilizer with an acid pH and up to 2 percent nitrogen. Collect grounds at home and from your local restaurant or coffee shop and use in the compost pile, or apply directly to the soil. Coffee grounds are a natural soil amendment and acid organic matter for bed preparation. Use directly in alkaline soils or mix into the compost pile.

**Cottonseed Meal** - Organic fertilizer with an acid pH. Good natural source of nitrogen and trace elements. Its acid pH makes it a valuable fertilizer for acid loving plants such as Azaleas and Blueberries. Apply 20-30 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Cow Manure** - Is loaded with beneficial living organisms. It is best to use cow manure in composted form to avoid weed seed and odor. Good source of nitrogen. Excellent in vegetable bed preparation and as an aid to manufacturing compost. Apply 20-30 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Epsom Salts** - A fast-acting source of magnesium and sulfur. Use dry at ½ pound per 100 square feet or add a ½ cup to each tomato plant or rose bush at planting.

**Fish Emulsion** - A concentrated liquid fish fertilizer for use directly in the soil or as a foliar feed. It is reported to be an effective insecticide.

**Poultry Litter** - Chicken litter is a great natural fertilizer. High in nitrogen and rich in nutrients, this manure is easily broken down and helps restore depleted soil to a healthy balance. Apply 20 pounds per 1000 square feet.

**Molasses (Dry)** - An excellent carbon and carbohydrate source that effectively stimulates beneficial microorganisms. It can be used as a bed preparation ingredient, as a compost starter or applied on the surface of the soil. Apply 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Molasses (Liquid)** - This sweet syrup contains sulfur, potash, and many trace minerals. Molasses is a good, quick source of energy for soil life and microbes in compost piles. Liquid molasses is used in sprays; dry molasses is broadcast. **Sugars are used to stimulate the microbes in the soil.**

**Mycorrhizal Fungi** - Contains living beneficial fungus; enhances root and plant growth. A healthy mycorrhizae fungi population can also boost plants' immune systems. The fungi can help the plants' uptake of phosphorous from the soil.

**Expanded Shale** - This gravel-size rock, which is pumped full of air, will aerate clay soil, make it easy to work and help it drain better. You only need to add it to the soil once and work it into the beds at root level. Expanded shale has been in test gardens for many years and does not deteriorate. This product is often referred to as a "Clay Buster". Till in 2- 3 inches of expanded shale, 6 to 8 inches deep, in all newly prepared landscape and vegetable beds. **Highly recommended.**

**Soft Rock Phosphate** - Excellent source of phosphorus and calcium. Great for vegetable garden preparation. Apply 25 – 50 pounds per 1000 square feet once a year, or ½ a cup to tomatoes/vegetables at time of planting.

**Sulfur** - Can be used to lower the pH of our North Texas alkaline soils. It is especially useful in the preparation of planting beds for Azaleas, Gardenia, Camellias and other acid loving plants. Apply granulated sulfur twice a year to such beds at a rate of 5 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Horticultural Cornmeal** - May be used in soil or bed preparation to help control fungal diseases on shrubs, roses, fruit trees and turf. Apply 20 pounds per 1,000 square feet of surface area of soil.

**Corn Gluten Meal** - Used to control annual weeds that germinate from seed. The key is to broadcast the material before the weed seeds germinate. It is best to make two applications per year - one in February-March and one in May-June. It is also an excellent organic fertilizer as it contains 9-10 percent nitrogen. Apply 15-20 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

**Dimension** - Can be used on your lawn and garden beds (as long as you do not wish to germinate seeds or grow bulbs) as pre-emergent to prevent any grassy weeds and many broad leaf weeds from germinating. Apply this pre-emergent in February and September for the most effective control of these problems.