

Recommended Organic Nutrient Sources for Home Gardens

Nitrogen

	Content	Relative release rate
Bloodmeal	13 % nitrogen	fast release
Cottonseed meal	6 % nitrogen, also 3 % phosphate	medium release
Fish meal	9 % nitrogen, also 6 % phosphate	fast release
Alfalfa meal	2.5 % nitrogen, also 2 % potash	medium release
Feather meal	15 % nitrogen	slow to medium release
Cow manure	variable (up to 1 %), also potash	fast release
Poultry manure	variable (up to 3 %), also provides phosphate and lime	fast release

Phosphorus

	Content	Relative release rate
Bonemeal	15 % phosphate	fast release
Rock phosphate	30 % phosphate (3 % available)	slow release, especially at high pH
Fish meal	6 % phosphate, also 9 % nitrogen	fast release
Poultry manure	variable (up to 3 %), also provides nitrogen and lime	fast release

Potassium

	Content	Relative release rate
Sul-Po-Mag	22 % potash, also 11 % magnesium	medium/fast release
Wood ash (dry, fine)	5 % potash, also provides lime	fast release
Alfalfa meal	2 % potash, also 2.5 % nitrogen	medium/fast release
Greensand or Granite dust	1 % potash	slow release
Cow manure	variable (up to 1 %), also nitrogen	fast release

Note: The release of nutrients from many of these materials in a form usable by plants requires the activity of soil microbes. Tilling these materials into the soil speeds the breakdown and release process. Conditions which inhibit or slow down microbial activity (cold soil, saturated soil, low soil pH) will greatly slow the release of available nutrients from these materials. Even the relatively fast releasing materials require at least a few days or weeks under ideal conditions. Slow releasing materials will provide available nutrients over several years from one application, but will not be useful for short term corrections.

As with any nutrient source, apply these materials only if they are needed, at rates recommended on your soil test report.