



## Compost Tea

The most exciting new item in biological disease control is "Compost Tea". Compost Tea is made by using high quality compost and microbe foods and then brewing it with oxygen (aeration) for about 24 hours. The "Tea" produced is a brown color and contains multitudes of diverse beneficial microorganisms that help establish a functioning soil food web to protect your favorite plants from disease and help them grow stronger and more beautiful.

1) At Nature's Way Resources we have spent the last two years attending many professional conferences on compost tea and doing our own research and biological testing. We took our 50-50 compost blend that many nurseries, landscapers and compost tea applicators had been using to make compost tea for years and re-composted it with a series of additives designed to increase the type and amounts of beneficial microbes required by healthy plants. As a result, we have produced superior compost especially designed to make compost tea! This compost is now available in 40 lb bags.

2) Many of our customers have been brewing compost tea or have wanted an easy way to start brewing compost tea. At several of the conferences we attended, many brands and types of compost tea brewers were tested and evaluated (these ranged in price from a few hundred dollars to over \$80,000). All the brewers used the same starting compost so the effects of the brewer could be measured. The second highest quality tea was produced by a simple homemade design based on a 5 gallon bucket. This summer we copied and built the 5 gallon brewer from scratch. It took over 6 hours of driving to visit all the retail stores and get the required parts. The parts also cost about \$150. This is prohibitive in time and cost, so we decided to build our own from materials we ordered directly from manufacturers. To order wholesale and get the reduced pricing we had to order enough supplies to build 100 brewers. So this winter when business is slower we are building our own 5 gallon brewers to sell that will be available this spring. We have also ordered the "Compost Tea Brewing Manual" by Elaine Ingham, PhD, the leading expert in the world on compost teas. They are in stock and available now.



3) We have also been asked by many customers both wholesale and retail if we would produce and sell compost tea on a weekly basis. We studied all the designs that produced the highest quality teas at the conferences we attended and have built our own 250 gallon brewer that we are testing. We are working with other tea brewers (Vintage Rosery, Rabbit Hill Farms, etc.) to develop compost tea recipes optimized for area of the country. As a result a high quality compost tea will be available for purchase this spring in quantities as little as a gallon or even a 55 gallon drum or more.

For more information on Compost Tea:

"Understanding How Compost Tea Can Control Disease", BioCycle, February 2003, p. 20-25

"Compost Tea: Principles and Prospects for Plant Disease Control", Compost Science and Utilization Journal, Autumn 2002, p. 313-338

International Compost Tea Council  
<http://www.intlctc.org/default.asp>

Compost Tea Industry Association  
<http://www.composttea.org>

ATTRA: Notes On Compost Tea  
<http://www.attra.ncat.org/attra-pub/compost-tea-notes.html>

Compost Tea Group:  
[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compost\\_tea](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/compost_tea)

"Soil Food Web information and Compost Tea Microscope Manual:  
<http://www.soilfoodweb.com>