

Compost Uses and Application Rates

Uses of Compost: Compost can be used as a soil conditioner, low grade fertilizer, decorative mulch, in potting mixes, to establish or rejuvenate lawns and play fields, etc. Nearly any type of soil can be improved with a 20 to 50% addition of compost. The ability of compost to suppress many common turf diseases as well as the natural “softening” of the grass surface has made compost a favorite material for golf course and sports field maintenance professionals. Compost can be used in the vegetable garden in much the same manner as one might use manure. MaineGro is a safe and effective product that needs no special handling or permits.

A word about Salt and Conductivity: Salts are common in soils to varying degrees, and in fact the nutrients in soils are in the form of ions that are commonly measured as salt. Too much salt can, however, be damaging to certain sensitive plants such as narrow leaf evergreens, rhododendrons, azaleas, and geraniums. It is also recommended that the salt content of potting mixes be tested. In nearly all applications, a salt content as measured by the conductivity of the growth medium (that is its ability to transmit a current through the compost-soil mixture) should not be above 3.0 mmhos/cm. Maine State regulations require distributors of compost having a salt content above 2.0 mmhos/cm to distribute information on salt content to customers. Based upon our testing and experience, the salt content of MaineGro should not be a concern in most applications.

Application Rates for Different Uses:

Use or Purpose	Application Rate	Notes, Remarks, etc.
New Lawn	1.5 to 5 (15 to 30%)	Till into the top 4 to 6 inches of soil, smooth surface, remove large objects, seed, hydro-seed, sprig or sod.
Lawn Rehab or Maintenance	0.5 to 2.0 (n/a)	Spring or fall, cut grass short, broadcast over surface and rake in. Keep lawn moist for 2 cuttings after appl
Renovation of Sports Fields	1.5 to 5.0 (15 to 30%)	Remove existing growth 2 to 4 weeks before tilling, follow new lawn instructions, hydro seed.
Vegetables	.5 to 4 (10 to 30%)	Till into the topsoil (3 to 6 inches). Lower rates if other fertilizer is to be used. Use precautions similar to manure.
Potting Mixes and House Plants	n/a (20 to 50%)	Mix Thoroughly using sand, vermiculite, perlite, etc. On salt sensitive species, test mix or use lower compost component.
Flower Gardens	.5 to 4 (10 to 30%)	Till into soil to a depth of 3 to 6 inches, or use as backfill when planting annuals and bushes mix well
Decorative Mulch	3 to 7 (1” to 2” layer)	Reduce fertilizer application, use care in erosion prone locations, weed seeds that land on compost will grow
Topsoil Blending	n/a (20 to 50%)	Use higher rates for very sandy or clayey soils.

Note: Application rates are given in cubic yards per 1000 square feet and percentage of compost in the final soil/growth medium mix. One Cubic yard of compost weighs 900 to 1100 lbs. Weight is highly variable with moisture content, as influenced by storage & weather.

Compost Use Estimator :

1 inch layer covering 1,000 square feet will require about 3 cubic yards of compost

1 inch layer covering 1 acre will require about 134 cubic yards of compost

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