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Organic farming for our future

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The future of many who rely on the farm is often seen as uncertain because of climate change that affects weather patterns and in turn production.

Not any more as the Foundation for Rural Integrated Enterprises and Development (FRIEND), a non-government organisation, proudly says it has found the solution to ensuring food security.

FRIEND's Melaia Salacakau says their organic farming method worked in hundreds of communities that have been introduced to these past traditional practices.

Here are some simple tips that can be used for improving soil health.

Many of these may not have pleasant smells but are harmless when inhaled and are surely good for our plants.

It is important to use knapsack sprayers that have not been contaminated with chemical sprays. Always use protective gear while preparing or spraying the following.

Organic Soil Improvement Practices

1. Poultry liquid Manure

Materials

To make your own poultry liquid manure:

- Poultry manure
- 55L drum
- Empty sack
- Wooden lid
- 2 0L water

Method of preparation

- Prepare a 55L drum
- Fill the poultry manure in the sack and tie.
- Fill 20L of water in the drum and put a stone on top of the sack to keep the sack of manure under water.
- Cover the manure with a lid.
- It will take three weeks for the liquid manure to be ready.

How to use

Using a knapsack sprayer:

- Add 1L of mix
- Add 4L of water
- Mix well and spray in gardens or farms.
- Spray on young plants for 1-6 weeks.

Soil improvement

Chicken liquid manure is reported to be a great source of nitrogen and other nutrients, and can quickly perk up a plant that needs a shot of nitrogen.

2. Ash Fertiliser

Materials

Collect ash from your fireplace.

How to use

Wood ash fertiliser is best used either lightly scattered or by first being composted along with the rest of your compost. This is because wood ash will produce lye and salts if it gets wet. In small quantities, the lye and salt will not cause problems, but in larger amounts, the lye and salt may burn your plants.

Soil improvement

Wood ash is reported to have an excellent source of lime and potassium for your garden. Not only that, using ashes in the garden also provides many of the trace elements that plants need to thrive.

Wood ash is also useful for pest control. The salt in the wood ash will kill bothersome pests like snails, slugs and some soft bodied worm-like organisms.



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