

When To Fertilize

Fertilize according to soil tests. Frequency, kind, and amount of fertilizer depend upon your original soil, your watering practices, and the temperature. Remember that the fertility should be low at the start of the crop, then increased as the crop becomes established. Fertilizer applied two weeks before the crop is harvested will do no good and is pure waste. Potash and phosphorus fertilizers are most important at the beginning of the crop, while the nitrogen level must remain medium at all times.

Potted plants usually require fertilizing with nitrogen every week or two, depending on the method and amount of watering. Bench crops may require fertilizing once every two weeks, every month or less often.

Maintain the same fertility level the year around. To date there is no evidence that one element must be increased and another lowered in winter or summer. If you carry a medium level of all elements at all times of year, you will produce the maximum. Usually, less fertilizer need be applied in winter than in summer to maintain the same levels because of less growth and less watering to remove the fertilizer.

Fine particle soils, as clay or silt, hold potash. Nitrogen must be added frequently. Coarser soils, as sandy types, lose potash as readily as nitrogen and usually both need be applied regularly.