



Inside this issue:

<i>Aerated Compost Tea</i>	2
<i>Vermicompost</i>	2
<i>Down To Earth</i>	2
<i>Compost, Compost, Compost</i>	3
<i>5 Steps to a Healthy Garden</i>	3
<i>Cover Crops</i>	3
<i>Overs Users of Fertilizers</i> — <i>The Worst</i>	4

Marin Soil Solutions just moved to its new location and is now open for business in San Rafael.

**Tue -Thu** : by appointment

**Fri and Sat:** 8 AM to 3PM

Founded on the belief that Marin gardeners want to be good stewards of the land and develop healthy soil to enhance their yards, Marin Soil Solutions produces aerated compost tea (ACT) and sells a microbial rich vermicompost.

In addition to the ACT and vermicompost, Marin Soil Solutions carries GSI compost tea brewers, **Down To Earth** garden fertilizers, mycorrhizae, Granular Azomite, and will

carry Larner Seeds and finely-crafted Japanese garden tools from ARS.

The new office and warehouse is located at 3095 Kerner Blvd, Suite B in San Rafael (next to U-Haul). Phone is 415-456-3300 and the shop will be open Friday and Saturday for walk-ins, aerated compost tea pickup and sales of vermicompost, fertilizers, and gardening tools.



*The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses.*

—Hanna Rion

Spoil your soil!



## Product Highlight—Vermicompost



Vermicompost is the breakdown of organic matter by red wiggler worms. It is a high-quality, nutrient rich soil amendment that has been shown to offer growth and yield advantages.

Marin Soil Solutions sells small

and large bags of vermicompost. Only a small handful, (about 1 cup) is needed for a 1-gallon plant and a small bag will satisfy about 30-40 plants.

Our vermicompost is pH neutral, will not burn your plants and can dramatically improve a

plant's root structure.



## *Aerated Compost Tea*



Aerated compost tea, or ACT is a great addition to any lawn, vegetable patch or flower garden. Its primary benefit is the acceleration of nutrient breakdown in the ground soil. Typically the application of compost takes anywhere from 2-4 years to work its way into the soil. ACT, being a liquid, can shorten this process significantly.

On top of that, ACT is natural, odorless and completely safe

around children and pets.

The use of compost tea goes back thousands of years but science has recently begun to examine the major role that beneficial microbes play in plant health.

Marin Soil Solutions provides 3 options for ACT.

1. We can produce, deliver and apply the tea on your yard 20 gallon minimum...
2. You can make your own

with a GSI brewer..

3. Or you can buy it by the gallon: 1, 3 and 5 gallons sizes will be available

Once in the soil, beneficial microbes assist in fixing nitrogen—the process of breaking down complex nitrogen and converting it to a soluble ammonium or nitrate for a plant to absorb.

Microbes also help aggregate the soil—keeping it “together” so air, water and roots can better penetrate.

## *Vermicompost*

**Vermicompost is the highest grade of compost available. It contains up to 5 times the plant available nutrients found in an average potting soil.**

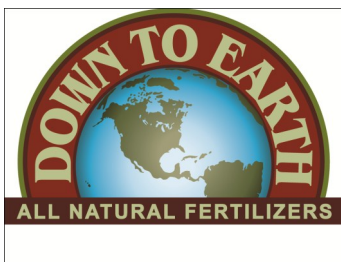
Vermicompost is the highest grade of compost available. Marini Soil Solutions’ vermicompost originates at the Straus Family Creamery in Marshall, CA along the shores of Tomales Bay. Water is extruded on site and it is then hauled to Sonoma where it is composted in an efficient proprietary process at around 145

degrees for 2-3 weeks. That “compost” is then added to continuous flow worm bins, 1” layer per week, where it is processed by millions of red wiggler worms. The original 1” layer takes about 2 months to work its way to the bottom of the worm bins where it is then, collected, dried and sorted.

The finished product has a neutral pH and contains up to five times the plant available nutrients found in an average potting soil.

It is this vermicompost that we sell by the bag and use to make our aerated compost tea.

## *Down To Earth All Natural Fertilizers*



Marin Soil Solutions is proud to announce its relationship with Down To Earth. Down to Earth has been around for over 30 years and has been one of the country’s leading manufacturers and distributors of natural fertilizers and premium organic gardening products.

We like Down to Earth because they blend their fertilizers using the best sources of organic nutrients and do not include synthetics, growth stimulants, or low quality fillers like poultry waste.

The products come in unbleached, 100% recycled box-

es. The boxes are printed with soy-based ink and completely recyclable in your home compost pile.

Their boxes also hold more volume reducing the cost per pound.

## Compost, Compost, Compost....

One of the most beneficial things a gardener can do is apply at least a 1" layer of compost twice per year—once in the spring and once in the fall.

Proper compost—compost that is prepared properly and does not contain weed seeds or pathogens is a primary source of food for soil microbes.

Applied in the fall, the winter rains help distribute nutrients and organisms. Applied in the spring, it ensures an adequate

food source for soil microbes.

It is important to get the compost tested to see what levels of N-P-K exist and to ensure that there are acceptable levels of pathogens.

For more information go to:

<http://attra.ncat.org/soils.html>



1 teaspoon of good garden soil contains 1 billion bacteria, yards of fungal hyphae, several thousand protozoa and a few dozen nematodes.

## 5 Steps To A Healthy Garden

Marin Soil Solutions prescribes a very simple, step-by-step process to ensure healthy soil. Healthy soil is the foundation of a healthy garden.

Assuming that the right plant is in the right place (not too much sun/shade) and that the soil's pH is correct, a gardener can do very well by the follow-

ing:

1. Proper irrigation
2. Mulch—protects against sun, erosion, contains weeds and maintains soil moisture and temperature.
3. Compost, and organic matter applied at least twice per year at 1" layer.
4. Aerated compost tea applications to promote soil biology and diversity.
5. Use of organic fertilizer.

**"A Garden is never so good as it will be next year..."**

—Thomas Cooper  
*Get the tee shirt*

## Cover Crops and Green Manure

Cover crops have long been used by farmers as a way to increase fertility and passively add nitrogen to the soil during winter months. Home gardeners can benefit from the same practice.

Crops like fava beans, clover, vetch and rye grass are known as nitrogen fixers. They have

the ability to absorb nitrogen from the air and store it in their root nodules for later use and nodulation by soil microbes. Typically plants have to get their nitrogen from the activity of soil microbes or the addition of organic/inorganic fertilizer.

Cover crops are typically plant-

ed over the winter months to ready the soil for spring planting. Once the crops have grown for a while, they are plowed under and left to compost into the soil. With the addition of compost, your soil will be in better shape and your plants will be happier within 4-6 weeks.



## Marin Soil Solutions

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We're on the Web!

[www.MarinSoilSolutions.com](http://www.MarinSoilSolutions.com)

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*Build Your Soil Organically*



*Marin Soil Solutions is locally owned and operated and was founded in 2010 to introduce, educate and assist gardeners in Marin County to the importance and benefits of healthy soil. We started by offering an aerated, microbially diverse compost tea and rich vermicompost. We have since added the Down To Earth line of organic fertilizers, with plans to carry ARS garden tools, Larner Seeds and other garden-friendly products.*

*We provide home application and delivery of the tea and will sell soil amendments to the gardening public throughout Marin County and San Francisco.*

*For more information, contact Tom or Bill at 456-3300 or come by our store at 3095 Kerner Blvd, Suite B, San Rafael, CA (down the road from Home Depot).*

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## *Over users of Fertilizers—Who Are the Worst?*

*"Many gardeners believe that if a little fertilizer makes lawns and gardens grow, then a lot will really make them grow," says Mitchell.*

AUBURN, March 12--- Homeowners and gardeners are among the worst abusers of chemical fertilizers, says Dr. Charles Mitchell, an agronomist with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

"Many gardeners believe that if a little fertilizer makes lawns and gardens grow, then a lot will really make them grow," says Mitchell.

The homeowner, just as the farmer and landowner, has a responsibility to help protect the land and water supplies. Soil testing and following label recommendations as closely as

possible will help you have a beautiful landscape, a healthy garden and a safe environment, says Mitchell.

Too much fertilizer can leach into groundwater or enter surface waters through runoff. High nitrates have been identified in some groundwater supplies in Alabama, and excessive phosphates in lakes and streams could create water quality problems.

Nutrients don't all come from commercial fertilizers, says Mitchell. Composts and manures can also result in very high soil test levels of some nutrients, especially phospho-

rus. Many Alabama gardeners use poultry broiler litter. Keep in mind that poultry broiler litter is about a 3-3-2 fertilizer and over application could hurt plants as well as the environment. Composts are about a 1-1-1 fertilizer.

SOURCE: DR. CHARLES MITCHELL, Extension Agronomist, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, (334) 844-5489

Taken from <http://www.aces.edu/dept/extcomm/newspaper/mar11b01.html>