

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR BEDS FOR SPRING

Characteristics of Good and Bad Soil

| GOOD SOIL | BAD SOIL |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Loose, fluffy with good drainage | Very compact, water seems to not drain |
| Large population of diverse organisms | Small population of organisms |

What happens between fall, winter, and spring?

Fall to Winter:

- Ground begins to get hard and cold
- Some plants are able to grow (i.e. dark leafy greens), but not for long
- Ground and soil are prepped for winter

Winter to Spring:

- Ground begins to thaw
- Ice crystals in soil begin to melt
- Soil is easier to shovel and turnover

Notes:

How to Prepare your Beds for Spring

Projected last frost date for 2016: April 20th

Step 1: Pull out any debris left from previous season

- Weeds
- Roots
- Straw
- Cover crop (if you used it)



All of these can be thrown out

Step 2: Compost

- Add at least a ½-inch layer of good compost
- Compost will provide soil with a fresh infusion of nutrient-rich organic matter, and improve the soil’s ability to handle water and nourish crops.

Step 3: Turn over your soil to “wake it up”

- Use shovels, rakes, and other tools
- Breaks up compacted, cold soil to wake up organisms
- Turn over entire garden — not just the top!

Compost vs. Manure

| Compost | Manure |
|--|--|
| Decayed plant matter (i.e. leaves, plants, grass clippings, kitchen scraps, etc.) used as a plant fertilizer | High in nitrogen, may contain traces of what the animal ingested |
| Can be introduced to soil in spring | Need to introduce to garden at least three to six months before planting |

Notes:

