

SOIL pH LEVELS AND YOUR LAWN AND GARDEN

By Melanie Wright

Fertilizers and acid rain often causes pH levels in lawns and gardens to drop below 6.3. Many soils are naturally acidic often from decomposing coniferous trees or oak leaves. Acidic soil prevents growing plants from effectively using the available nutrients in the soil. The presence of moss growing in your lawn or garden is a sure sign of acidic soil.

All successful lawns and gardens need proper pH control as an important part of their maintenance programs. A pelletized limestone can be applied either on its own or in combination with your fertilizer application. It dissolves immediately into the soil with water and begins to work quickly by acting as a buffer, much like TUMS does for your stomach, to neutralize acidic soil with calcium and magnesium which are all-natural organic buffers. It is safe and non-toxic to humans, animals and plant life since it is made from organic ingredients from the earth. Pelletized limestone is easy to use with any lawn spreader and it is non-burning and dust-free.

To determine the requirements of your lawn or garden, a simple pH soil test is suggested. In the absence of a test, the following recommendations should be followed. New lawns -- Apply 40 lbs. of pelletized limestone per 1000 sq. ft. and rake lightly into the soil before seeding.

Established lawns – Apply 12 lbs. of pelletized limestone per 1000 sq. ft. For clay soils, increase spreader setting to apply 18 lbs. per 1000 sq. ft.

Applications should be repeated yearly (or whenever soil pH drops below 6.3) for proper soil maintenance. The pelletized limestone may even be added with any lawn spreader at the same time as fertilizers. Gardens have a deeper root zone than lawns and therefore require a higher rate. For best results, double the lawn rate and mix to a depth of 6". For incorporation, after application, wet thoroughly 30 minutes before tilling.

A simple pH test of the soil in your lawn or garden will determine if your soil needs to adjust its pH levels to achieve the perfect balance for that healthy, green lawn and bountiful garden.