



SOME USEFUL PLANTS TO ADD TO YOUR COMPOST RECIPE

(Adapted from When Weeds Talk, Copyright 2013 by Jay L. McCaman, Sand Lake, MI)

Some plants offer a specific source of minerals. This is because these plants have collected minerals in their tissues which can help future plant growth when decomposed. This a sample list and not all inclusive. Any crop residue can be helpful in the compost recipe. These are also considerations in choosing “green” cover crops.

When materials are properly hot composted, most weed seeds and rhizomes should be dead, preventing further growth. It is best if you use the foliage as an additive avoiding roots and seeds as some will love to regrow in your compost!

For higher nitrogen sources, all legumes are helpful.

Comfrey	<i>(Symphytum spp.)</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>(Urtica dioica)</i>
Cattail reeds	<i>(Typha latifolia)</i>
Hairy Vetch	<i>(Vicia villosa)</i>
Clovers	<i>(Trifolium spp.)</i>
Alfalfa	<i>(Medicago sativa)</i> , also called lucerne or purple medic

Potassium sources

Fennel	<i>(Foeniculum vulgare)</i>
Borage	<i>(Borago officinalis)</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>(Urtica dioica)</i>
Sow thistle	<i>(Sonchus oleraceus)</i>
Chamomile	<i>(Anthemis nobilis)</i>
Yarrow	<i>(Achillea bilis)</i>
All Oak bark	<i>(Querus)</i>



Phosphorus sources

Bridal bower	<i>(Spirea bumalda)</i>
Marigold	<i>(Tagetes parula)</i> or <i>(T. erectus)</i>
Chickweed	<i>(Stellaria media)</i>
Lemon balm	<i>(Melissa officinale)</i>

Trace minerals

Sulfur	Mustard Fennel Plantain	<i>(Brassica campestris)</i> <i>(Foeniculum vulgare)</i> <i>(Plantago lanceolata)</i>
Magnesium	Mullein Sow thistle	<i>(Verbascum blatteria)</i> <i>(Sonchus oleraceus)</i>
Silica	Comfrey Borage Horsetail fern	<i>(Symphytum peregrinum)</i> <i>(Borago officinalis)</i> <i>(Equisetum arvense)</i> or <i>(E. hyemale)</i>

Comfrey has many minerals and ads activators. Vetches are high in selenium while Comfrey and Lambsquarter have plenty of manganese. Dandelion is a calcium collector and is also high in potassium.

[Note: If you are disposing of food waste, one only need look at the *nutrient label* on the package to know what it adds to the compost recipe. Knowing the nutrients of each ingredient helps to create a consistent and reliable compost recipe.]