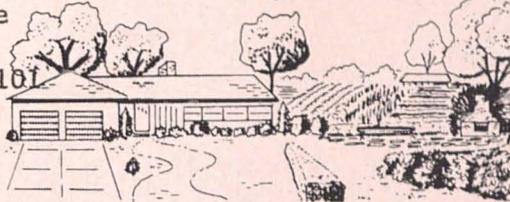


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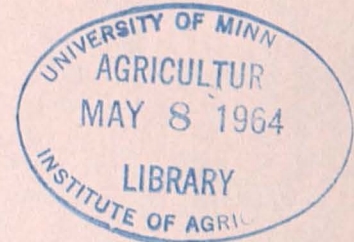
Yard 'n' Garden



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SOIL PREPARATION

One of the secrets of a successful garden is a well-prepared soil. Sufficient organic matter is one of the essential requirements. This will improve the structure and make it possible for the soil to hold more moisture and allow for better aeration and root development.

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There are several forms of organic matter that can be used in the spring at soil preparation time. Probably the most popular are manure, compost and peat. Apply about 4 bushels of one of these to each 100 square feet (10 feet x 10 feet) of area of your garden. This material should be spaded or plowed into the soil and mixed thoroughly with it early in the spring.

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In addition to the application of organic matter, it is generally advisable to apply some nutrients each spring in the form of a commercial fertilizer. About 3 to 4 pounds of a complete fertilizer per 100 square feet of area is usually sufficient. This should be worked into the soil to a depth of 1 or 2 inches after plowing or spading. Then it will be readily available for the young seedlings to use soon after germination.

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Some examples of complete fertilizers are 5-10-5, 10-10-10, 5-20-20, 8-16-16 and 8-8-6. They all have nitrogen, phosphorus and potash which are essential for plant growth.

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Don't work the garden soil too early. Wait until it is dry enough so as not to stick to shoes or implements. A good test is to compress a small amount of soil in the hand. If it is not sticky, it will crumble when you release the pressure. If it is too wet to work, it will stick together in a ball.

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Remember, packed soil is undesirable for good root development. Don't rake the seedbed too much.

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