

Container Mixes, Recipes from Gaia College

As in cooking - everything is approximate. Go by feel and with available ingredients*.

Soil-based potting mix

Use for transplants or potted plants.

Required:

- 1/3 mature compost **OR** leaf mold **OR** well decayed woodchips
- 1/3 good topsoil
- 1/3 sharp sand (crushed granite is easy to find and good for energy flow)

Important additions:

- If topsoil has high clay content, add ~20% perlite in addition to the sand
- Add ~5-20% paramagnetic rock dust or glacial rock dust (if available)
- Drench the potting mix with [Effective Microorganisms](#) (AEM) to activate soil microbiology
- When transplanting, soak rootball in [liquid kelp](#)

Soil-less seedling mix

Use to start seedlings or root cuttings.

Required:

- 1/3 fine compost (worm castings or living sheep manure that's alive – not sterilized in bags - are both great)
- 1/3 peat, coir or well decomposed wood chips or some sort of coarser organic material **OR** if your compost is a little coarse already you can use up to 1/3 good topsoil
- 1/3 perlite (the more mineral your soil, the more you need the big air pockets provided by perlite)

Optional:

- Rock phosphate (Calphos, a *couple of handfuls per wheelbarrow*). A foundational mineral that helps build the optimum environment for soil biology.
- Calcium carbonate (limestone-best Ca:Mg ratio 8:1 dolomite lime is 2:1. [Dan Skow says](#) "calcium is for energy creation potential in the soil to release the other elements for plant growth")
- Glacial rock dust (Azomite or Spanish River Carbonatite) **OR** kelp meal for trace minerals.
- [Mycorrhizal fungi inoculum](#) (like Myke or Root Rescue). Forms mutually beneficial relationships with plants. If you add it to the seedling mix you don't need to apply it at planting time.
- [Activated Effective Microorganisms](#) (AEM) diluted with water 100:1. AEM adds an extra layer of microbe diversity that can outcompete pathogens. AEM also helps make the minerals you've added available to the seedlings. Soak the seeds in EM and dry them enough to sow. Or use a spray bottle to mist the top of the soil blocks before putting the lid on

*Most ingredients are available at Kingston Organics & Hydroponics on John Counter Boulevard. You can buy the ingredients not available locally (such as EM) online at [The Organic Gardener's Pantry](#).

For more gardening resources, visit Rideau1000IslandsMasterGardeners.com