

Chemical and Synthetic vs. Organic.

What's the difference?

Chemical fertilizer: Any inorganic material of synthetic origin added to soil to encourage plant growth.

Organic fertilizer: Substance derived from the remains or byproducts of natural organisms which contain essential nutrients for plant growth.

Comparing the NPK levels.

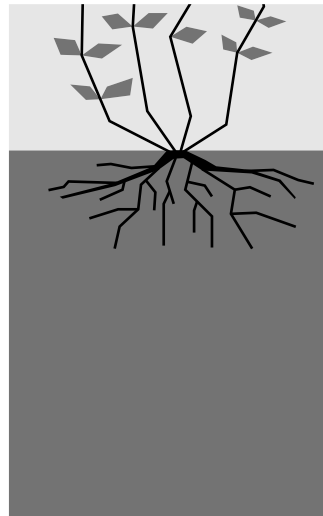
Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P), and Potassium (K) are the most common components for all fertilizers. Like many things in life, more is not always better.



↑ N ↑

Nitrogen

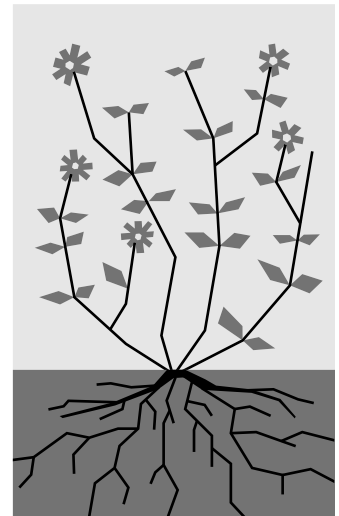
Greens up plants
(leaf & foliage
growth)



↓ P ↓

Phosphorus

Reaches down to
the roots & helps
produce blooms



← K →

Potassium

Promotes all
around wellbeing
& growth

An organic fertilizer may have a low-seeming NPK rating, say **5 - 3 - 3**.

A common and popular synthetic fertilizer has an NPK of **10 - 10 - 10**.

Synthetic fertilizers typically have higher values for NPK than are necessary or that the plant can use. These high numbers can result in immediate vigorous growth and flowering, leading us to the conclusion that the plant is healthy and this fertilizer is amazing!

However, many experts compare the use of synthetic fertilizers for plant health to the use of steroids for human health. Long term health is compromised by the impressive results of immediate growth.

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After witnessing such impressive results, the “more is better” approach settles in, which can lead to applying too much or too frequently. Either of these can burn the leaves and roots, resulting in plant death, as well as a toxic build up in your soil ensuring your next plant is off to a bad start as well.

Soil is a living entity made up of lots of organic matter, microbes, fungi and bacteria. Some studies show that synthetic products kill these soil-dwelling living critters.

Further research has shown that synthetic fertilizers can stimulate the soil life to such an extent that they begin to consume more organic matter than the plants can return to the soil.

This leads to a stripping of all key nutrients, which in turn, weakens the plants leaving them prone to pests and diseases resulting in the need for an increase of pesticides and fungicides! And so it goes.

In addition to damaging our plants and weakening our soil, synthetic fertilizers are one of the major culprits of our polluted waterways. Yes, that is most frequently related to agricultural practices, but our waterways need all the help they can get.

Organic fertilizers may not work as quickly but they are focused on the health and longevity of the plant as well as the soil. In fact, they actually feed the beneficial microbes in the soil.

