

2025 HELPLINE QUESTIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY TOPICS / QUESTIONS

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Question 1. Soil Properties and Building Healthy Soils

Background

We are starting a home vegetable garden this year and believe we would benefit from getting a soil analysis completed. Our soil is mostly sand, so we recently tilled compost purchased from our local farmer's market.

We think the final soil ratio is 20% sand, 80% compost. The Village Mercantile told me that the compost is made up of ground bark and composted steer manure which has "cooled off" for at least 120 days. The Village Mercantile folks thought that the 20/80 mix that I have should be good for a vegetable garden and didn't think any further supplements/fertilizer would be necessary.

So here are my questions:

Do you think I should add any other supplements or fertilizer to the soil?

Should I send 2 cups to Colorado and have a soil test performed for the \$35 fee (per the Sandoval County Extension office form)?

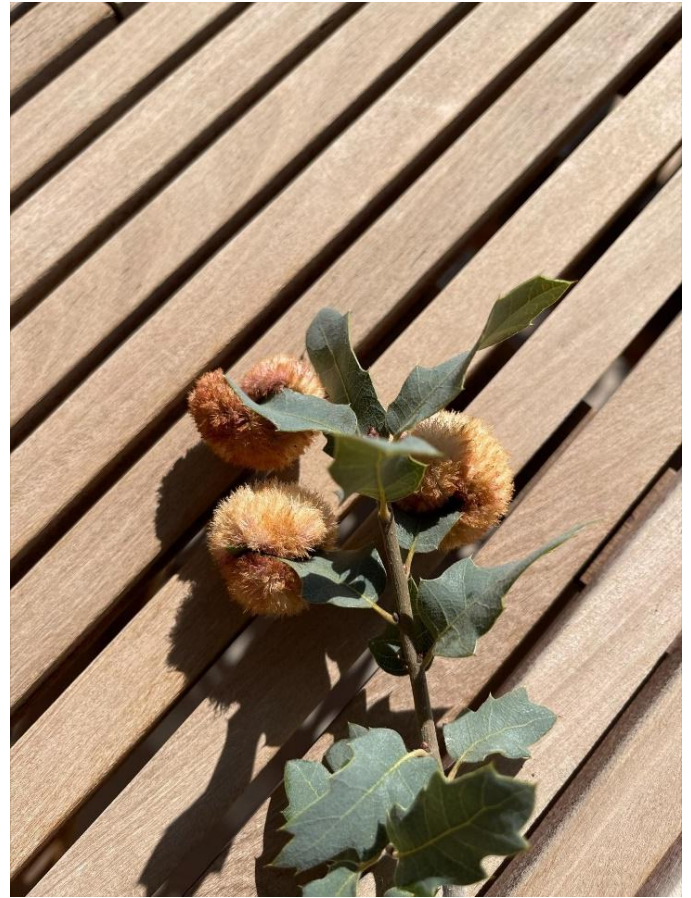
Any other thoughts/comments would be welcomed. Thank you for your advice.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

1. Soil Properties

- Soil building practices
- Compost – cold and hot, what's green, what's brown?
- Soil sponges
- No till cultivation
- Cover crops
- Soil remediation

Question 2. Basic Botany



Good evening,

I have been referred by the Sandoval County Extension office regarding my ash tree that I believe has gall. I have attached a picture. I am hoping that there is a way to treat the tree. It is beautiful and I do not want to lose it.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

2. Basic Botany

- How does flower type influence your plant choice/ placement/ pollinators?

- Perfect flower (male and female in one)
- Monoecious flower (1 plant with male and female flowers)
- Dioecious flower (separate male and female plants)

Question 3. Fruit Trees and Care



Hi there, this apple tree has been planted in this area for about 15 years I usually fertilize once a year last year this started and this year it's just gotten worse, I have been using a liquid iron key light and we water two or three times a week deeply.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

3. Fruit Trees

- Climate ready. Add berries and nuts
- Guilds – how to build them, maximizing productive space
- Continue permaculture zones

Question 4. Growing Vegetables



I have some of my zucchini squash doing this - this one is about 6" long - (I cut it open to see if there were grubs/worms.) Blossom end turns yellow, and mushy and slowly travels up the squash. Have gotten good squash off same plant. Just some of them do this. Cause?

Sustainability
Topics/Questions

4. Growing
vegetables

- Traditional vs climate ready
- Microclimates, expanding possibilities
- What are sources for vegetables native to SW – Native Seed Search, Plants of the SW, Public library all vs big box stores and commercial nurseries
- Recipes for new & usual vegetables – how to use what grows
- Benefits of perennial vegetables in garden
- Companion plants
- Integrating pollinators

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- Continue permaculture zones (location of crops according to use)
- Role of animals

Question 5. Tree Selection and Care

A friend wants to plant an apple tree but doesn't know what variety will grow in Rio Rancho. She wants to plant it in front of her house which faces north. What would you recommend. She had one before but doesn't know what kind it was.

Thank you

Sustainability Topics/Questions

5. Tree Selection

- Climate ready trees- review Nature Conservancy list
- Concept of permaculture zones

Question 6. Ornamentals



My Japanese Holly (box leaved holly) are dying. I planted them 4 months ago. I water them daily during the heatwave. What is the proper fertilizer and what can I do to save them? Thank you.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

6. Ornamentials

- Add edibles and medicinals
- Plants from similar climates (Iran, Afghanistan)

Question 7. Watering the Yard and Garden

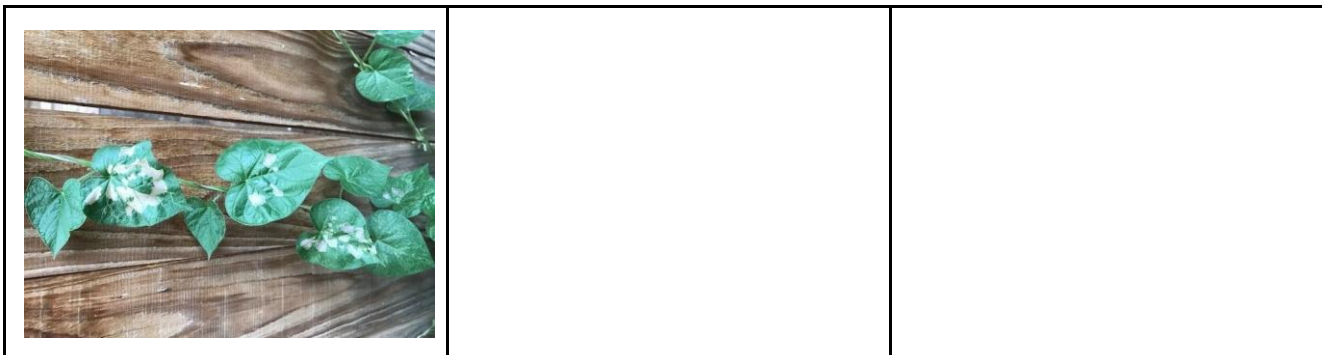
Part 1

Hello! I've recently moved to New Mexico from Colorado where I had sprinklers for my lawn. Here we have a drip line system and I'm unsure about what I need to do to winterize it. With the sprinklers we used an air compressor to blow out all of the lines. What is recommended here?

Thanks!

Part 2





Something bad is happening to all my plants this year, and I don't know what it is or what to do.

It seems like the leaves first start to get a little spotted and dusty looking, then they turn yellow and brown and die. Someone suggested spider mites, and I did find a spider on one plant, but I don't know if he's a mite or just an innocent regular spider?

Sustainability Topics/Questions

7. Watering

- Watershed and groundwater
- Drip irrigation
- Flood/ acequia
- Traditional (waffle, olla etc)
- Passive
- Active
- Watering by zones

Question 8. Catch-up Week- Spring Break

What has changed in your garden so far?

Sustainability Topics/Questions

8. Sustainability in your garden?

Question 9. Plant ID by family



Can you tell me the name of this shrub seen on Southern Blvd in front of Dairy Queen? I am looking for a flowering shrub I can prune into a small tree that gets no higher than 10-15 feet. I have a couple of ideas.

Sustainability
Topics/Questions

9. Plant ID by family

- Desert plant family characteristics including N2 fixers

Question 10. Integrated Weed Management

Hello. We recently moved to Placitas and just heard about invasive tumbleweeds. Coming from Washington State we are clueless about these. How do we control or get rid of them? Is there an herbicide you recommend?

Sustainability Topics/Questions

10. Integrated weed management
 - Weeds reflect soil type
 - Beneficial, edible, medicinal
 - Roll of mulch

Question 11 Plant Pathology

I have a Smoke Tree that seems to be a bit unhealthy at the moment. I planted this tree about a year ago and it seemed very healthy in early Spring/Summer with seed shoots and new growth. However, by mid Summer we started seeing leaves curling. The tree has sprung two new shoots, but within a few weeks, the leaves on these shoots are also drying/curling.

The tree is given water by two lawn sprinklers, which water 6 days a week for 30 minutes per day.

Note: we increased the sprinklers in July from 3 days/week to 6 days. The tree was already showing signs of stress at that time.

I recently added drip to the tree, but the ground seem fairly moist, so I can remove it needed.

Attached are a few photos for your review.



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Sustainability Topics/Questions

11. Plant pathology
 - Tie into family
 - Abiotic & biotic
 - Right plant for climate
 - Diagnostic process – integrating all above

Question 12. Entomology



Bug

We have lots of these. What are they. How should we treat them?

Sustainability Topics/Questions

12. Entomology

- What attracts pests
- What attracts beneficials

Question 13. Pollinators in NM & Building Habitat



Can you please help identify these beetles. While watering they emerged from the mulch to escape the moisture. Are they friend or foe?

I live in Corrales west of Loma Largo.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

13. Pollinators in NM

- Role of pollinators, native and non-native
- Role of native plants

Question 14. Alternative Ground Covers, Grasses, Lawn conversions

Needs a photo but we don't have one yet.

Sustainability Topics/Questions

14. Alternative Ground Covers
 - Role of ornamental grasses
 - Pro and con of meadows
 - Cover crops
 - Cool vs warm season
 - Pros & cons of turf

Question 15 Turf - None