

Background of the Compost Tea Brewer (*)

There are two people who should be recognized for their involvement in this process:

1. Carl Rubenberger, the person who first developed the aerated compost tea brewer. Without Carl's insight, diligent work and willingness to experiment, none of us in the industry would be where we are today.

2. Dr. Elaine Ingham is the real personal energy, asking questions, gathering data, explaining, experimenting and testing. This scientist has the energy of a four-year-old, with the wisdom and patience of a 96 year old. Through her lectures, books, lab and personal conversations, she is teaching us all about the soil, plants and microbes.



What we are exploring with the compost tea brewing system is very similar. It will dramatically change how we grow plants and how we perceive and interact with the earth. This is an exciting time to be living and involved in this search for solutions and understanding.

Some important ideas to always have in mind when thinking about and dealing with the brewing process and its application to plants and the soil are:

1. We are at the very beginning of the process of knowing and a lot of conclusions may be wrong—there is not yet enough data.

2. This is a living, changing paradigm due to all the variables involved in the process—we need more data.

3. These microbes are alive. You must ask yourself, “What am I doing and how does this impact living creatures?” i.e. placing brewed tea in a container to spray on plants that has pesticides in it and I didn't adequately clean it out. Or using water with chlorine in it. I have just placed living organisms in a killing zone and they are all dead or wounded. Now what was a beneficial solution will not be very useful to plants or soil application. As Dr. Ingham says, “You've got to keep thinking about this.”

4. You must be involved in the process mentally. You must continually ask the questions—why, when, where, how come. You are involved in a very, very personal relationship. You must think about what you are observing ...what some of the problems are and how your actions/reactions can impact their outcomes. You must become a working partner in the relationship. It's really no different than being a husband/wife or a parent. The more you are involved in the relationship, the more personal and rewarding the relationship can be.

The process that Carl Rubenberger began was one of taking compost plus food for microbes, placing it in clean water (no contaminants i.e. chlorine, which kills bacteria), and adding a machine. Now this process of multiplying the population of biolife in the compost becomes a biological army to protect, extend the nutrients, water intake and change chemicals around the plant to a useable form.

What is the process and why is it so effective?

What happens when we plant a plant in a location where it isn't 100% happy?

Plants take energy from the sun during the process of photosynthesis and convert it into foods they need to sustain themselves. One of the very important recent findings was that 50% of this food is used by the plant internally to grow and sustain itself. The other 50% of foods (sugars/carbohydrates) coats the outside of its leaves, twigs, trunk and roots to feed an army of microbes to protect it from pathogens (disease-causing army) and extend its root system to pick up more nutrients. This is the natural process between plants, sunlight, micro and macro-organisms and the soil, etc.

We have hybridized/changed plants from all over the world and for a number of reasons within this new environment, the plant is not naturally functioning at 100%. Now the plant is stressed either within the soil or above ground. Because the new plant is not producing the foods it naturally needs, predators move in to eat this injured or starving, weak plant.

With the preceding information you can see most of our plants are not functioning at 100% either because of the soil or location. It's very similar to people who aren't getting enough food for nourishment or live in an area where war or natural disasters are occurring. They do not have the basic foods or environment they need to grow and sustain them without disease. If we have plants that are struggling, it is always a result of dead or poisoned soils, environmental conditions or our choice of plants.

When we are doing a foliar spray with compost tea, we are resupplying the plant with an army supplied with foods to support and defend the plant against disease and insects. This is the natural process we are reinforcing through technology.

Aerated compost brewing is really a process of taking compost, adding foods for microbes, water, and a brewing machine. When all of these parts are very high quality what will be produced is a brewed tea that will inoculate the plant or soil with the army it naturally would surround itself. We are able to give plants or the soil the army of biolife with this new process they are not able to give themselves.

Quite simply, the brewing machines are a replicating machine. They replicate the number of microbes. Because of this, the higher the quality of the compost, water, specific foods for specific microbes, machines and finally the delivery method are all parts of a process that determine the quality (positive or negative) of life for the soil or plants.

From the beginning of the process to the very end, there are a number of ways we can create a strong army or an army that is ineffective or harmful. Dr. Ingham is constantly reminding us "That you've got to think about this more!"

As I get more involved in this process I am amazed at how simple, yet how complicated it is. The perspective of stepping back and looking at the process, plants, soil and natural systems really helps. To be successful it is helpful to have an overview of the processes and critically look at all of the parts in this process. We must always be open to new information from data. We are in the very beginning of a new perspective about the natural world and our interactions as growers and gardeners.

A very exciting time!!

(*) Fonte: <http://www.simplici-tea.com/simplici-tea-wp/home/compost-tea-background/>