



Published on *Kitchen Gardeners International* (<http://kgi.org>)

[Home](#) > Build Your Garden Soil Naturally

---

## Build Your Garden Soil Naturally

Sat, 03/13/2010 - 02:41 -- tdonald

When you look at the the deep, fertile soils of the North American prairies, you can take a lesson from nature and apply it to you own garden.

How were those soils created? Grass and buffalo!

In a nutshell, here's a how it worked. The grass grew. The buffalo grazed it. In response to the loss of above ground greenery, the grass would trim its roots to remain in balance. The trimmed roots became food for the critters living underground. This is how the organic food bank in the soil was build up over thousands of years.

We've been mining these reserves for a couple hundred years now. I believe a lot of the extra carbon in the atmosphere is actually coming from this loss of carbon in the soil. Chemical agriculture is killing the soil. But that's another article... back to the point.

You can imitate this soil building process in your own back yard. Here's how.

Your lawn is the prairie. You lawn mower is the buffalo.

When you mow, the grass has to shed roots to remain balanced. This builds the organic content of your lawn. You are sequestering carbon. And yes, normally you should just let your clippings lie.

Now collect the grass clippings the mower/buffalo grazed and use them to improve the organic content of your garden soil. Spread them about 1/2 inch thick over your garden and dig them in. It's that simple.

Maybe you have unenlightened neighbors that put their grass clippings on the curb for pickup. (Isn't that the craziest thing?) Confiscate them too if they haven't been contaminated by lawn care chemicals.

Group content visibility:

[Use group defaults](#)

---

**Source URL:** <http://kgi.org/blogs/tdonald/build-your-garden-soil-naturally>