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When it came to growing vegetables this year we were a bit pressed for time and hadn't been able to start anything from scratch as we were accustomed to doing in the past.

We also decided to focus on herbs since our new residence didn't allow for a full-fledged victory garden and felt growing veggies on the balcony wasn't to our liking.

However, with the herbs doing great and flourishing I couldn't resist and bought a few vegetable plants to add to the mix. Besides, herbs are an excellent [natural pest control](#) [1] so the veggies would be in good company.

The new plants include some cherry tomatoes, peppers, some baby leafy lettuce and radishes. The tomatoes and peppers have their own separate pots and the lettuce and radishes are sitting in a few long plastic flower trays that needed a good clean but had appropriate depth for the small but fast maturing veggies.

After the first few weeks we noticed the lettuce and radishes seemed to be doing well but the tomatoes were having a hard time.

Searching for some answers we checked the soil and decided to begin foliar feeding, the process by which a plant absorbs fertilizer in a most direct way: through pores in the leaves.

Rather than have to wait for nutrients to travel upward from the roots foliar feeding makes an immediate influence on plants through a healthy jolt of nourishment that strengthens limbs and helps produce more bountiful fruit.

And of the available fertilizers to choose from one of the best is seaweed.

If you live near the coast all that's needed are a few large but fresh pieces to make the foliar spray. Even if you aren't near the coast seaweed is sold in dried form at home improvement and hardware stores. We've used seaweed many times in the past and give it two thumbs up.

Just be careful not to over stimulate plants with too much spraying which will have adverse effects. Plants still need care and watering but should only be sprayed according to their needs, which could be anywhere from once or twice a week to once a month.

This is probably one of the biggest points to take into consideration when treating your crops through this method but when done right it's usually very successful.

I can attest that the spray appears to be working its magic on my balcony like it's done so many times in the past.

Jakob Barry writes for Hometalk.com, a growing community of homeowners and contractors getting the most from their resources by sharing and monitoring home improvement projects. He covers various home improvement topics including eco-friendly [2] gardening services and [3] landscaping maintenance.

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