



Jacqueline question

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Question:

When and how can I add organic matter to my garden?

Topics::

[composting and soil fertility](#) [1]

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Answer::

Try to add organic matter every time you plant, dig, or till. Here's a basic plan that will improve any soil, from clay to sand: Add before you plant. When preparing a new garden bed, spread a thick layer of compost, well-rotted manure, or other organic matter. Then add a new layer of organic matter every spring after that. Apply mulch. Once the soil warms up and crops are in place and growing, spread a layer of organic mulch, such as straw, dried grass clippings, or chopped leaves. Dig in at season's end. Once a particular crop

is finished, dig the mulch and crop residue into the soil (unless it is diseased). Plant a cover crop. Once you've pulled out a crop at season's end, sow an annual cover crop like red clover or hairy vetch to protect the soil over winter, control weeds, and add more organic matter. Dig it into the soil a few weeks before planting in spring. Reprinted from The Veggie Gardener's Answer Book Copyright 2008 by Barbara W. Ellis, with permission from Storey Publishing. Creative Commons photo credit: Mezuni

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