

How to use The New Black Biochar in your garden

We want you to get the best results possible using our product. Here is some information about our biochar, and some tips and tricks for ways to most effectively use it in your home garden.

How does it work?

The secret to biochar's success as a soil conditioner is its stable, highly porous carbon structure and huge surface area at the microscopic level.

This makes it fantastic at holding water and nutrients that can be accessed by plant roots, and stop these things being leached through the soil where they can pollute the water table.

Biochar is not a fertiliser in its own right. It can enhance the effectiveness of any fertilisers that are applied with it by storing and holding those nutrients.

It can also improve soil structure and provide a home and shelter for soil microbial life. So, if you have a sandy poor soil, biochar is likely to be very beneficial.

If you have a rich, well structured and fertile soil already, you may not see a big benefit from applying biochar.

Importantly, freshly made 'clean' biochar is very good at holding nutrients. If you use clean biochar in your garden it can temporarily lock up available nutrients and reduce plant growth.

Read our notes over the page to make sure you prepare and apply your biochar to get the best positive results

Warning – biochar can be dusty when dry. Take care.

How do we prepare biochar for use in the garden?

Moisten it – go for the goldilocks zone of not too wet, not too dry.

Innoculate it with microbes – mix with compost or worm castings.

Mineralise it – add some minerals such as seaweed, fish emulsion, comfrey tea, chook poo slurry.

Mature it – we're all better as we age! If you can, leave for some weeks before use.

The easiest way to do all this is to mix your biochar in a bucket with some liquid fertiliser, worm wee and/or compost. Wait a few weeks then use.

How do we get it into the garden?

There are various ways to get your prepared biochar into the garden. Here are some options:

- Crush and add to compost, up to 10% by volume
- Use in soil blocks or potting mix
- Handfuls in bottom of pots when potting up seedlings
- Scatter 'charged' biochar on soil surface: a few handfuls per m² is sufficient
- Dig in with green manure or compost
- Put in the bottom of a planting trench, cover with a thin layer of soil, plant above the biochar 'band' (great for sweet corn)
- Add to worm farms, a light scatter every few feeds

Unlike compost, biochar won't break down in your soil. A perfect way to incorporate it is 'little and often' rather than a big application all at once.

The New Black Biochar is made in Glen Huon from eucalyptus sawdust. Pyrolysis stabilises the carbon in the wood, which would otherwise eventually decompose, releasing CO₂.

It has a high carbon content (75-95%) and if added to your garden will store carbon and support soil life for hundreds of years.