

Factsheet - BREW YOUR OWN HIGH-FUNGAL TEA

with OAKWOOD BEAM STARTER – March 2022 – version 5

On Farm Brewing (OFB) with Oakwood BEAM Starter (OBS) provides a high-fungal tea starter based on local and diverse biology at low cost and with unlimited potential. Brewing tea from OBS on-farm provides fresh and active high-fungal compost teas for soil or foliar application.

Preparation of 40 L of OBS for 1000 L of OFB

Step 1

- Collect local soil from creek, fence-line, under mulch, away from any chemicals.
- Mix thoroughly.
- Store in cool moist area - not too wet or too dry.

Step 2

- Mix the growing medium:
 - 30 L fresh moist worm casts
 - 10 L Mill Run
 - 2 Kg of the local soil mix
 - 500 ml molasses (or 200 gr sugar)
- Mix well in dry form.
- Add water till 70% water - just able to squeeze a drop of water – not wetter.

Step 3

- Place the medium 8 – 10 cm deep on a tray with a bottom that allows draining or on soil.
- Cover with cloth.
- Spray water twice / day to keep cloth damp.

Notes:

- It is essential to allow free drainage.
- A slight warming will initially occur.
- If it is compacted too dense or is too wet, it may be lacking air and some parts will not develop fungi and will smell.

Step 4

- Allow to grow 48 – 96 hours in a dark humid place.
- It is ready when fungi cover the growing medium, and when broken apart the fungi will be visible throughout the medium.
- It remains suitable for use for several days.



Two days after starting



Close-up

Brewing equipment for a 1000 Litre compost tea



Materials needed

- Tank 1000 L pod.
- Pump enough capacity to pump 1 L air / 1 L water / minute.
- Control tap between pump and aerator to adjust air flow rate.
- Pipes 1 length of 40 mm PVC pipe.
T- pieces, 90° elbows, 45° elbow and end caps to suit your design.

Note: As a precaution we suggest to brew in an open space and use a face mask when inspecting during aeration. Not all soil fungi are human-friendly in high concentrations.

To ensure adequate aeration, enough air needs to be pumped to give 2 – 8 cm boil on the water surface – a very jumpy surface. (A suitable air pump: 75cu m/hour gives 1,250 L/min, enough for 1000L with excess).

Drill holes along both sides in each of the pipes at the bottom. Place these sideways to give strong and complete agitation at all bottom corners of tank.

Brewing

- Mix in 1000 L water (non-chlorinated): 2 L fish emulsion, 4 L Seaweed, and 4 L Biology Booster.
- Soak 40 L OBS, for only 10 minutes, break up by hand and add to the tank.
- Brew for 24 – 48 hours prior to application.
- Assess development under microscope.
- Apply ASAP after stopping aeration – (within 3 – 4 hours maximum without air).

Field Application

Apply 80 – 200 L / ha of brew plus as much water as practical.

- Strain the brew after brewing and remove any restrictions in application equipment.
- Minimise any pumping - the lower the pressure the better (max 60 – 70 psi).
- Keep out of sunlight.

Injection behind a coulter places brew approximately 10 cm below the surface.

With adequate moisture, applications 2 metre apart have shown to join within 50 days as fungi can grow fast.

Address limiting nutrients such as major nutrients, trace elements, micro elements.

Note: Soils with an already good fungal diversity are unlikely to show a response and any poor performance of pasture may be due to other factors.

Evaluate 'Nature's Cycle' diagram and pasture management for other limiting factors.

For further information and advice contact Trevor - 0417 196 315.



One application technique