

# Frost Protection and Potatoes

Are you struggling with the erratic weather patterns and their effects on the garden? After a very dry January and part of February also being dry, we now have a lot of rain and wet weather to deal with.

Heavy soils are slow to warm up and after this weekend of another strong influence and possibly strong weather expressions of gusty winds, heavy rains caused by Mercury passing the ecliptic and disturbing the sun's normal activity.

Some of you might have experienced strong frosts this month, but be prepared for more ground frost on Monday and Tuesday in most of Britain and even Ireland.

To balance these extremes it helps to employ the biodynamic preparations more frequently and, in my experience, the valerian preparation and the feldspar preparation are of utmost value at this time to mitigate the effects of extreme weather conditions, and with the imminent frost danger to balance the experience of temperature extremes for plants.

To obtain the feldspar preparation please p.m. me as there is not space here.

The Valerian preparation can protect blossoms and seedlings to -5° centigrade from frost damage. I noticed that the ornamental cherry blossom and in some areas the magnolia are already in full bloom.

So, what are our options in spring to **protect our seedlings and blossoms?**

- Make small smouldering fires to create a 'smoke screen' above the garden with the particles attracting moisture and that way keeping in the warmth. *(Please note this is only suitable in less built up areas, be sensitive to neighbours and their needs!)*
- Spray a fine mist in the morning over the seedlings and blossoms before sunrise, when the temperature is the lowest to protect them from frosting as the cold air has to freeze the fine water layer on blossoms and seedlings first, which releases heat over them.
- Make sure your plants have enough water and are not anywhere near their wilting point. Well-watered plants experience less frost damage.
- Spray the biodynamic valerian preparation at night or before sunrise stirring
- 2ml per 100m<sup>2</sup> into 1 litre of rain or filtered water, stir for 15-20 minutes before spraying a fine mist over the plants and the garden.
- A more physical long-term way would be to make sure you have hedges around the garden, which can raise the temperature in your garden in winter by 3-5° centigrade.
- Use a thermo-fleece or cloches to protect your seedlings and blossom, though with fruit tree blossoms that might not be possible on bigger trees.

I hope that these tips give you an idea how to protect your vulnerable seedlings and the ornamental and fruit tree blossoms in early spring, when snow does not protect them.

Last but not least put into your calendar, two propitious days for **potato planting**:

30<sup>th</sup> March with the moon in the Twins and a light/air trine

31<sup>st</sup> March with the moon in the Twins and in Apogee.

This will encourage stronger growth of tubers and less top-heavy growth, which then is less likely to get attacked by fungal or bacterial spores.

So after all there is light on the horizon, spring is springing

Happy spring gardening

Hans-Günther

