

Benefits of Making Nettle, Comfrey Ferments and Horsetail Extracts

You might have noticed that we had recently very cold nights again, which might have caused a stagnation in the metabolism of plants, inviting exploding aphid populations.

Aphids damage the leaf membrane and act as disease vectors spreading fungal, bacterial and viral disease organisms.

How can we remediate this and possibly prevent these occurrences in the future?

Nature has given us wonderful materials to work with using, Stinging Nettles, Comfrey and Field Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*).

Furthermore biodynamic insights, research and experience has given us the Horn Silica and Feldspar preparations.

Today, I would like to concentrate on the first three plants mentioned.

The Horsetail extract (listed originally as biodynamic preparation 508) is easily prepared. Horsetail can be obtained fresh from damp and waterlogged areas or can be ordered from the BDA in dried form and is made quickly by bringing 150 g fresh or 300 g dried Horsetail to the boil in 2-3 litres of water and then allowed to simmer for 20 minutes.

The mix is left for a day to absorb the silica and sulphur from the horsetail plant.

Then we take 1 part of the decoction and 9 parts of water and either apply it as a soil or foliar application.

The fastest effect to strengthen the epidermis and alleviate fungal attacks is the foliar application and for prevention and long-term effect R. Steiner recommends applying it as prophylactic on the soil around your cultivars a few days before every full moon, when the likelihood of fungal attacks is higher.

Concerning the Comfrey and Stinging Nettle, we can make ferments by collecting 1 kg fresh plants of either of the two, chopping them up with a spade and then putting them into a 10 litre bucket.

The Stinging Nettle can be used after soaking in water after one day for combatting aphids, spider mites and other sucking insects by spraying it pure onto foliage and aphids.

Leave the rest of Stinging Nettle to go through the process of fermentation for another 3-4 weeks and then use to regulate growth and the metabolism for conditions

mentioned in the beginning.

This might prevent further fungal and aphid attacks in the future.

To help to outgrow the damage and to strengthen the cellular structure and membranes in the plants to make the penetration of leaves of sucking insects and fungal spores more difficult in the future apply Comfrey ferment on a regular basis after fermenting it like the Stinging Nettle ferment.

According to Henry Doubleday's research many decades ago comfrey can help the health and growth particularly of Beans and Tomato plants greatly as it supposedly has the same proportions of nutrients as they do in their cellular structure and therefore they have an affinity to the make-up of substances in comfrey.

If your ferments get too smelly add a sprinkling of clay or basalt powder after each time you stir the ferment to avoid the unpleasant smell.

I wish you luck and much success with your regular application of these magic potions, which have proven themselves very useful for decades.

Happy gardening

Hans-Günther

For a visual guide go to the video on our YouTube channel Wholistic Living University: <https://youtube.com/shorts/x1EMZMI7wQQ?si=UWPR1E2mQH07P20>