Mulching vs. Digging and Composting: Are You Concerned About Your Soil Biome?

Are you concerned about your soil biome?

Are you aware of what the soil biome consists of?

What can you do to enhance this unique life form?

Do you dig the soil, fork it over, or mulch it as we find it in nature?

Or might we have to backtrack and ask: Do I actually know what the soil biome consists of, and what it is?

🌿What is the soil biome?

It refers to all microorganisms, mostly present in the topsoil, consisting of a long list of bacteria, fungi, their mycelium and mycorrhizae, creating the largest community of biodiversity known on this planet.

All soil organisms, both macro- and microorganisms, are there to make sure that the cosmic forces and light information, visible and invisible, are received via the plants and their fibre (the fibre-optic carbon-silicon communication system, involving cellulose and lignin, between the Earth and the cosmos) and communicated to the mycelium and mycorrhizae.

These are interlaced and grow into the intercellular tissue in the root hairs, creating a tight neurological communication system that is more effective than our brains or the fastest computers.

In turn, they release adequate moisture and nutrients and prepare them for our cultivars to take up in a predigested, bioavailable form, appropriate to the prevailing environmental factors at the time.

When the soil and its life forms are thus informed by cosmic forces and light, which are differentiated by the movement of the planets, the Sun, the particular and ever-changing weather conditions, the vegetation, and the fauna that roam and creep over and under the Earth, we can ask ourselves:

How do we ensure that this information and energy flow is always optimal and in a healthy relationship?

🌳What can we learn from the forest?

If we look in the forest, we see that this function is performed by the trees, shrubs and mushrooms, nourished by one fall of leaves per year, which we could call mulching.

I conclude from this that, yes, if I want to mulch my soil lightly, like the sprinkling of leaves once a year, it makes total sense in a vegetable garden to mulch lightly with compost, leaf mould and other organic residues, such as straw, if I have plants growing in the beds.

However, I would never just mulch an empty bed, as it would separate the soil from this information and energy flow.

In fact, I would rather dig the soil or fork it over after applying a light layer of well-rotted compost or leaf mould before winter.

I would also apply the horn manure preparation and the cow pat pit preparation to sensitise the soil and open it to the interchange of these forces, allowing them to flow freely between the Earth and the cosmos!

🍂Other considerations when mulching

Unless you have light, well-drained and well-aerated soil, and use only natural materials that are semi-permeable to rain, air, light, warmth and winter frost, I would abstain from mulching during the winter half of the year.

The detrimental effects of thick mulching, or the use of impermeable materials, could cause particularly heavy soils to develop anaerobic, putrefying conditions.

These conditions create poisons for your microbiome and for the future plant roots that you would want to sow in spring.

They would also leave a heavy, cloddy structure and compacted soil, impairing the preparation of seedbeds for spring sowing.

In wet conditions, mulching would also encourage the breeding of slugs, snails and other soil-borne pests, such as caterpillars, as it creates a stagnant and overly "earthly" force field, rich in the elements of minerals and water.

🌞When does mulching make sense?

The only time I would suggest that mulching makes sense in a biodynamically run garden in Britain is during the summer months, when parts of your beds are barren and you want to protect the soil from drying out or from excessive, harmful cosmic radiation.

The benefits of a well-balanced soil, where mulching is employed discerningly, will lead to a maximum variety of microorganisms.

This, in turn, will create the best biome and nutritional supply for the plants and, consequently, the most nutritious and health-giving plants for us to eat.

🌱From the soil microbiome to our gut microbiome

Have you heard of the gut microbiome?

Or do you take probiotics?

And did you know that the common antibiotic streptomycin was discovered in the soil?

Please contemplate how beneficial it could be for you to expose yourself regularly to the soil biome:

- By not scrubbing your vegetables thoroughly before eating them raw.
- By not using gloves and allowing your fingertips to come into contact with the soil.
- By breathing deeply when you are in your garden.

I will coin a new term: **"Soil bathing."**

You have probably all heard of forest bathing?

It has been established by microbiologists that the more you expose yourself to a multitude of microbial life forms, the healthier your gut biome will be.

Therefore, your mood and emotional response to life, your overall immune system response and your wellbeing will be optimal.

🌏**What can the garden teach us?**

So, in closing, I would say that we should rather ask the question:

How can I help the soil to open up to the environment and yet be adequately protected?

We need to ask ourselves the same question when dealing, as people, with our social and natural environment.

Therefore, I dare say that the garden could become our greatest teacher in creating healthy lifestyle choices.

Next time, I'd like to write about one of the questions raised above:

What do I do to enhance the unique life form of the soil biome?

🌱Happy gardening!

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