

GROMOR NOVEMBER 2015 NEWSLETTER

In the November 2012 Gromor Newsletter I wrote "In view of the exceptional rains that we've experienced on the East Coast this spring-----" Now, just three years later it's dangerously dry not only on the East Coast, but over the whole country!

There is as much water on earth today, as when it began. Water cannot be made or destroyed, but it is prone to pollution, caused primarily by man! The availability of fresh, clean water is likely to become "life's" first limiting factor on earth.

The mining sector uses only 2,5% of South Africa's water, but that is NOT the water footprint of mining.

The seriousness of this is not always appreciated. Take for example the brewing industry on the Rand Reef, where the water pollution from mines threatens the industry which requires 150l of clean unpolluted water to make just 1 pint of beer! This is serious!

FERTILIZING PLANTS

I shudder when I see what goes on in gardens, through injudicious fertilizing practices.

1. Some gardeners don't fertilize at all on the pretext of following an ORGANIC philosophy.

If one DIGS and TURNS the SOIL over and/or removes vegetation (including grass clippings and weeds) from an area, at the very least COMPOST needs to be applied annually. The advantage of using GROMOR COMPOST is that the manure base ensures that temperatures in excess of 60°C are reached during composting, killing any possible pathogen contamination, while the vital HUMUS forming process continues unhindered. It is also higher in plant nutrients than a compost made solely from vegetative material.

Apply 1 x 30dm³ bag GROMOR COMPOST/5m² to 10m²
or 1 x 50dm³ bag GROMOR COMPOST/10m² to 15m²

2. In other cases, heavy amounts of fertilizer are heaped around plants and the fertilizer is blamed when they wilt and die.

What happens is that the heavy application in the root area causes the EC in the soil to rise beyond what the plant can handle and instead of taking up the dissolved fertilizer nutrients from the soil, the soil literally draws water out of the roots (reverse osmosis), causing the plant to wilt and die. DON'T OVERAPPLY fertilizer, especially not concentrated above the root area.

It can be likened to what happens when you have a very "salty" dinner - you spend the night with a dry mouth and having to repeatedly go to the loo for a wee. You do however have the ability to correct the situation for your body by drinking water. In most cases plants would also come right if one watered them heavily for a week or two!

As a general guide SPRINKLE GROMOR FERTILIZER at 30g to 50g/m² evenly around the plants.

If extra growth is required, repeat the application once or twice in the growing season.

NB: FERTILIZER, which contains plant nutrients in concentrated form, cannot replace COMPOST, which supplies HUMUS and SOIL ORGANIC MATTER, allowing the fertilizer to be optimally used by plants.

3. Finally, if you want to follow the ORGANIC route:
 - a) Apply and dig in GROMOR AGRICULTURAL LIME at 300g/m² every 3 years.
 - b) Apply and dig in GROMOR COMPOST.
 - c) Apply GROMOR ACCELERATOR ORGANIC FERTILIZER PELLETS at 150g/m² and dig it lightly into the soil before planting.
NB: GROMOR ACCELERATOR PELLETS can also be applied as a TOPDRESSING, again at 150g/m²
 - d) Once growing, cover the bare soil between plants with GROMOR ORNAMENTAL MULCH.

4. As a general rule POTPLANTS also need to be fertilized, except in the case of certain exotic ones where the FEEDING and WATERING recommendations are clearly explained on the label.
Whilst a complete macro and micro element fertilizer is blended into GROMOR POTTING MEDIUM, this cannot be relied upon to supply potplants with sufficient nutrients for an indefinite period.

An easy and practical way to handle potplants and get the best from them, is to:

- a) Choose a convenient day of the week and repeat the practice below weekly.
- b) Dissolve GROMOR PLANT FOOD at 1g/litre water (T spoon in 5l) and "water" an adequate amount to ensure RUNOFF, out of the bottom of the container. GROMOR PLANT FOOD is available in 500g TUBS, 2kg BUCKETS and 20kg BAGS (3.1.3(37) ws complete).

NB: Problems dissolving the fertilizer are usually an indication that the water pH is too high. On a commercial scale add 125ml nitric acid per 1000l water, adding more if necessary, to bring the water into the 5 to 6 pH range, before adding fertilizer.

For the home owner using regional water, add a cup of vinegar per 5litres of water, before adding fertilizer.

WEEDS IN LAWNS

The ROUND LEAF weeds HYDROCOTYL and OXALIS (often misnamed clover) start becoming a nuisance at this time of the year, particularly in shady moister areas of the lawn.

Choose a WINDLESS, SUNNY day with NO rain forecast and spray infested areas, before they take over.

To 5l water in the spray tank, add 1 cup vinegar and 50ml MCPA. Unfortunately, it is confusing, with the active ingredient MCPA sold under different trade names e.g. RESCUE, BANWEED, TROOPER etc. Alternately use 2,4D (e.g. SUMMIT) at 10ml/5l water which will also do the trick.

For a broader spectrum of BROADLEAF weed control than either on it's own, use a combination of MCPA and 2,4D at the same rates as above, in the same tank.

If the triangular leaf WATERGRASS/NUTGRASS is a problem, add 1g SERVIAN to the 5l spray.

MOWING

Try not to mow the grass too short, especially in spring, as it needs photosynthetic leaf area to build up root reserves and remember that if grass clippings are REMOVED, one is removing nutrients from the lawn, particularly POTASSIUM required to keep the grass blades strong and healthy. If REMOVING clippings is your practice, fertilize with GROMOR 5.1.5(28) at 50g/m², RATHER than the standard lawn fertilizer, GROMOR 4.1.1(21) and apply GROMOR LAWN DRESSING. One 30dm³ bag per 5m² to 10m².

CHRISTMAS CLOSING

Last working day - 18 December 2015

Opening new year - 4 January 2016

Regards,
GROMOR (PTY) LTD

R. HAGEN

PS: Having been asked by my dear friend Nadia Redgrave to raise the standard of my PS's, I give you the following.

Whilst making the endless speaker circuits, Albert Einstein was longing to get back to his laboratory. On the way to yet another appearance, Einstein mentioned to his chauffeur how tedious he found these speaking appearances.

"I have an idea Boss" said the chauffeur, who coincidentally resembled Einstein in many ways. "I've heard you give tonight's speech many times. I bet I could give it for you". Einstein was taken aback, but laughingly agreed: "Why not!"

Arriving at the venue Einstein donned the chauffeur's cap and jacket and settled himself comfortably at the back of the hall.

The chauffeur gave an excellent rendition of the speech and even answered some questions. Then a pompous professor asked an extremely esoteric question about antimatter formation, digressing here and there to let everyone in the audience know that he was nobody's fool. Without missing a beat, the chauffeur fixed the professor with a steely stare and said: "Sir, the answer to that question is so simple that I will let my chauffeur, who is sitting in the back, answer it for me."