

## GARDENING BASICS - Amendments

Bellevue Nursery believes that good gardening begins with the soil. Here are some general descriptions of planting mediums to increase your gardening success.

**Amendments** are additions to your garden/growing medium which alter the physical, chemical, and/or biological properties of the soil.

You can use organic (e.g. Compost, peat moss, manure), or inorganic (e.g. Gravel, perlite, gypsum ) material to amend your soil depending on your goal; e.g. water retention, drainage, aeration, enrichment, etc. Vegetable beds benefit from regular soil amendment to a depth of 6-12”.

Note: Sand is not an ideal amendment when used in large quantities since it tends to compact when wet.

**Compost** is an ideal soil amendment. It is a combination of various plant and animal (organic) materials such as manure, peat moss, fir bark fines, oyster shell, etc. that are thoroughly blended and decomposed. In addition to increasing the soil’s moisture/nutrient holding capacity, compost promotes the activity of earthworms and beneficial soil microorganisms. There are many resources available about backyard composting. Check out the WSU extension office for lots of good information.