

# **Building Your Litter Bank**

**Greg Judy**

# What Is Litter?

- Any Material That Decays

1. Grass

2. Leaves

3. Sticks

# Litter Brings Life

- Interface Between Plants And Soil.
- Litter Feeds Microbes & Earthworms.

# Soil Life

- It Starts With Litter.
- Litter Is Slowly Consumed.
- New Soil Is Formed.

# Litter Holds Moisture

- One Unit Of Humus Holds 8 Times It's Weight In Water
- Preserves Surface Moisture.

# Litter & Microbes

- With Bare Soil, 100% Microbial Activity Stops.
- Bare Soil Stops Earthworm Activity.

# Bare Soil Is Death To Plants

- Bare Soil Has 90% Evaporation Rate.
- Bare Soil Sheds 50% Of Rainwater.

# Soil Fact 1

- 1 Billion Microbes Per Teaspoon Of Healthy Soil.
- Soils Are Lacking Adequate Microbes.

## Soil Fact 2

- What's Happening Below Ground Will Eventually Show Itself Above Ground.

# Earthworms

- Earthworms Are Nature's Plow & Fertilizer Factory.
- Amount Of Earthworms Present Is Best Indicator Of Soil Life .

# Tilling The Soil

- Earthworms Mix Litter, Air & Water Into The Soil.
- Vertical Burrows Pipe Oxygen 5 feet Into Soil.

# Subsoil Minerals

- Earthworm Castings  
Contain 5-10 Times The  
Amount Of Soluble  
Nutrients As Original Soil.

# Earthworm #'s

- 25 Earthworms Per Sq. Ft.  
=1 Ton Of Worms Per Acre.
- 1 Ton Worms = 100 Tons Of  
Castings Per Acre/Year.

# Added Benefits

- 4 Lbs Nitrogen/Year
- 30 Lbs Phosphorus/Year.
- 72 Lbs Potash/Year
- 90 Lbs Magnesium/Year
- 500 Lbs Calcium/Year

# Laws Of Earthworm Survival

1. Three Square Meals A Day.
2. Put Their Food On Top Of The Table.
3. Keep A Roof Over Their Head. Leave Them Alone!

# What's The PH Of A Casting?

- Neutral -7
- They Inject Lime Into Casting As It Leaves Their Body!

# How Do We Get Litter?

- Must Have Mature Plants.
- Vegetative Plants Do Not Trample Easily.
- Bend The Stem, It's Litter.

# Graze To Trample Ratio

- 60% Grazed
- 30% Trampled For Litter
- 10% Left Standing.

# Standing Grass

- Grass Left Standing Acts As Windbreaks.
- This Preserves Moisture In Pastures.

# Stop Burning

- Burning Removes Litter.
- Burning Promotes Plant Spacing.
- Burning Kills Microbial Life In The Soil.

# Litter Conclusions:

1. Must Have Mature Plants
2. Density High Enough To Break Plant Stems Over.
3. Don't Eat Or Burn Litter.
4. Litter Brings Life To Soils.