



Celebrating 22 Years!

ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR QUESTIONS info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335



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QUESTION THIS WEEK:

Dear Linda, I would like to know how I can improve the growth of my rhubarb throughout the summer. I know it needs a lot of water; my husband puts 5-10-10 on it in the spring. Years ago, my parents would put horse or cow manure on theirs. Does rhubarb usually have a short life span in the summer? What do you suggest? Thank you, Rochele

Linda's Answer:

Hi Rochele,

To improve the overall health and vigor of rhubarb, put lots of composted horse or cow manure around the plants just like your parents did. Rhubarb is a heavy feeder and needs lots of nutrients to produce the stalks in the spring. Apply mulch generously around the plants using straw or the manure to keep the soil cool, retain moisture and keep the weeds at bay.



Rhubarb

In the spring, just after the last spring frost, apply a light sprinkling of a high-nitrogen fertilizer (25-3-3 or 10-6-4) when the ground is thawing or has just thawed. The fertilizer your husband used did not have enough nitrogen in it.

Rhubarb grows best when temperatures are below 75 degrees. During the hot, humid summer rhubarb will slow down its growth until cooler weather returns. Make sure to water your plants during the times when there is no natural rainfall. Good Luck.

Thank you for your question.

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 22 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects.

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