

Contents

	<i>page</i>
PREFACE	9
WHY CHANGE ?	15
1.1 <i>Loam composts</i>	18
1.2 <i>Loamless composts</i>	18
2 ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS	19
2.1 <i>Peat</i>	19
2.2 <i>Other organic materials</i>	29
2.3 <i>Mineral materials</i>	36
2.4 <i>Plastics</i>	40
3 PHYSICAL ASPECTS	43
3.1 <i>Physical terminology</i>	43
3.2 <i>Physical requirements of composts</i>	45
3.3 <i>Energy concept of water in composts</i>	46
3.4 <i>Water absorption and release by composts</i>	50
3.5 <i>Formulation of composts: physical principles</i>	53
4 PRINCIPLES OF NUTRITION	60
4.1 <i>Cation exchange capacity</i>	60
4.2 <i>Anion exchange capacity</i>	63
4.3 <i>Availability of nutrients: loam v. loamless composts</i>	63
4.4 <i>Nutrient uptake by the plant</i>	67
4.5 <i>Acidity (pH)</i>	70
4.6 <i>Lime requirement</i>	73
4.7 <i>Soluble salts</i>	74
NITROGEN	82
5.1 <i>Nitrogen and pot plants</i>	83
5.2 <i>Forms of mineral nitrogen</i>	86
5.3 <i>Slow release fertilisers</i>	91
5.4 <i>Choice of fertiliser type</i>	98
5.5 <i>Nitrogen and peat</i>	103
6 OTHER MACRO-ELEMENTS	107
6.1 <i>Phosphorus</i>	108
6.2 <i>Potassium</i>	114
6.3 <i>Calcium</i>	116

12 Contents

	<i>page</i>
6.4 <i>Magnesium</i>	122
6.5 <i>Sulphur</i>	122
6.6 <i>Mineral soil and peat comparison</i>	123
6.7 <i>Nutrient and environment interactions</i>	126
6.8 <i>Fertiliser analysis and salt index</i>	128
6.9 <i>Plant mineral levels</i>	128
7 MICRO-ELEMENTS	130
7.1 <i>Boron</i>	131
7.2 <i>Copper</i>	135
7.3 <i>Manganese</i>	136
7.4 <i>Molybdenum</i>	137
7.5 <i>Iron</i>	138
7.6 <i>Zinc</i>	141
7.7 <i>Chloride</i>	141
7.8 <i>Aluminium</i>	142
7.9 <i>Fritted micro-elements</i>	143
7.10 <i>Chelated micro-elements</i>	145
7.11 <i>Other sources</i>	146
7.12 <i>Micro-element availability</i>	148
8 COMPOST FORMULATION AND PREPARATION	150
8.1 <i>Historical</i>	150
8.2 <i>Denmark</i>	151
8.3 <i>Finland</i>	152
8.4 <i>Germany</i>	153
8.5 <i>Ireland</i>	154
8.6 <i>Netherlands</i>	155
8.7 <i>United Kingdom</i>	155
8.8 <i>United States of America</i>	158
8.9 <i>Sawdust and bark composts</i>	162
8.10 <i>Azalea composts</i>	166
8.11 <i>Proprietary formulations</i>	169
8.12 <i>Compost preparation</i>	169
9 LIQUID FEEDING	174
9.1 <i>Importance of liquid feeding</i>	174
9.2 <i>Formulating liquid feeds</i>	180
9.3 <i>Practical aspects of feeding</i>	192
9.4 <i>Diluting equipment</i>	197
9.5 <i>Quality of irrigation water</i>	203
10 IRRIGATION SYSTEMS	205
10.1 <i>Drip systems</i>	205
10.2 <i>Capillary watering</i>	208
10.3 <i>Flooded benches</i>	213

11	JOHN INNES COMPOSTS	<i>page</i>	215
11.1	<i>Formulation</i>		215
11.2	<i>Compost ingredients: loam</i>		216
11.3	<i>Peat</i>		219
11.4	<i>Sand</i>		219
11.5	<i>Sterilisation</i>		220
11.6	<i>Characteristics and use</i>		221
11.7	<i>Composts for calcifuge plants (JIS (A.</i>		227
12	HEAT STERILISATION		229
12.1	<i>Thermal deathpoints</i>		229
12.2	<i>Methods of heat sterilisation</i>		231
12.3	<i>Steam</i>		231
12.4	<i>Steam-air mixtures</i>		235
12.5	<i>Flame pasteuriser</i>		238
12.6	<i>Electrical sterilisers</i>		239
12.7	<i>Other methods</i>		241
12.8	<i>Chemistry of heat sterilisation</i>		241
12.9	<i>Rules for heat sterilisation</i>		245
13	CHEMICAL STERILISATION		247
13.1	<i>Soil fumigants</i>		247
13.2	<i>Fungicides</i>		249
13.3	<i>Insecticides</i>		251
14	PLANT CONTAINERS		252
14.1	<i>Clay v. plastic pots</i>		252
14.2	<i>Paper and peat pots</i>		259
APPENDICES			260
1	<i>Metric conversions</i>		260
2	<i>Imperial and US capacity measures</i>		261
3	<i>Illumination and radiation units</i>		261
4	<i>Atomic weights</i>		262
5	<i>Formulae and molecular weights of some commonly used chemicals</i>		262
6	<i>Chemical gravimetric conversions</i>		263
7	<i>Temperature conversions</i>		263
BIBLIOGRAPHY			264
INDEX			271