

To:

Date:

Monday April 26, 2004

1 page from Mario Lanthier

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### **COMPOST TEA CONFERENCE - SEATTLE**

This one-day conference was held in Lake Washington, near Seattle, on March 12. It was organized by the International Compost Tea Council, a group associated with Dr. Elaine Ingham, of Soil Foodweb Inc.

About 80 persons attended, mostly manufacturers of tea brewers, landscape maintenance companies, and college students. There were 3 persons from Canada.

#### ***General comments***

- Good value (US \$80 including lunch) and most presentations were excellent.
- All persons regularly using compost tea report good success when applied to the soil. The improved plant growth may be from the stimulation of soil bacteria responsible for nutrient cycling. However, inconsistent results when applied to foliage.

#### ***Jeff Anderson, Mycorrhizal Applications Inc., Oregon***

- Known benefits of mycorrhizal fungi associated with plants:
  - Increased water uptake (decrease irrigation by 30%).
  - Disease resistance (production of antibiotics against *Phytophthora* and *Pythium*).
  - Improved tolerance to salty soils and drought situations.
- From Leonardo de Vinci: "We know more about the workings of the celestial bodies than the soil right under our feet."

#### ***Tom Piatkowski, Highlands Soil & Water, California***

- Step-by-step procedure for application of compost tea:
  - 1) Define the purpose of the tea application (in most cases, to restore soil fungus).
  - 2) Ensure a solid soil bacteria foundation (for nitrogen cycling and soil aggregation).
  - 3) Ensure tea quality (use top quality feed stock, nutrients, and machinery).
  - 4) Define the rate and frequency of tea applications (typical recipes: soil application at 10 gallons of tea per acre + humic acid, foliar application 20 to 30 gallons per acre).
  - 5) Measure and monitor (soil biology, soil chemistry, water quality, plant fertility).