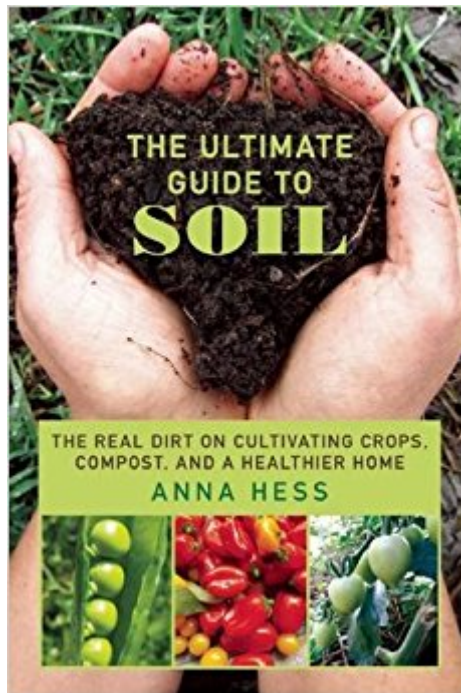


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# The Ultimate Guide To Soil: The Real Dirt On Cultivating Crops, Compost, And A Healthier Home



## Synopsis

Grow twice the fruits and vegetables in half the space on the farm, in the backyard, or in your window! Have you noticed the extraordinary flavors and yields emanating from even a small garden when the soil is just right? If you've ever been envious of your neighbor's dirt or just curious about homesteading, then *The Ultimate Guide to Soil* is perfect for you. The book begins with a personality test for your soil, then uses that information to plan a course of action for revitalizing poor soil and turning good dirt into great earth. Next, you'll learn to start and maintain a no-till garden, to balance nutrients with remineralization, and to boost organic matter with easy cover crops. Don't forget the encyclopedic overview of organic soil amendments at the end. Old standbys like manures and mulches are explained in depth along with less common additions such as bokashi compost and castings from worms and black soldier fly larvae. Learn when hugelkultur, biochar, paper, and cardboard do and don't match your garden needs, then read about when and how to safely use urine and humanure around edible plantings. With an emphasis on simple techniques suitable for the backyard gardener, *The Ultimate Guide to Soil* gives you the real dirt on good soil. Maybe next year your neighbor will be envious of you!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Finally! To have all of Anna's gardening ebook installments under one cover. I personally prefer reference/how to books in hard copy for ease of flipping through and finding the info. I'm looking for. The Personality Tests portion of the book suggests several tests such as "muddy water test, jar

test, ribbon test, carrot test, etc." that helps one determine the condition and type of soil. Also looked at is the color of your soil, crusting and clods, understanding soil lab tests and when it's necessary to get one and what the weeds growing in your garden can indicate about your soil. I found the Homegrown Humus especially helpful in choosing cover crops for my garden. Anna describes the pros and cons of each of the crops she covers and then lists her fave 5 and why. Also provides carbon and nitrogen ratios and using cover crops in a no-till garden. The No Till Gardening segment covers all one needs to know to begin a no-till garden, correct soil, and manage the no-till garden as well as weeds, solarization, and container planting. "The Ultimate Guide to Soil" will answer all your questions and help you build healthier soil and a rich worm population.

Not everyone is able to throw themselves wholeheartedly into small-scale farming. Ms. Hess is one of the few who has gone ahead and learned, through experience, what we readers can now learn from reading in our armchairs. Here in this book, without painfully going through several of the same time-consuming experiments ourselves in order to find out what might possibly work, we can reap the benefits from her multi-year observations. Not to say that all of the information in this book is applicable to all situations, but no matter what type or quality your soil is, you can get a general idea of what may work well in your area, and why. Then, continue on with the grand experiment that gardening is â " try something, and if it works, great; if it doesn't work, try something else. This book is an excellent springboard for whatever your gardening goals may be, and has been a great help to me.

Even though I read most of this in installments, I am glad to have it all in one hard copy, not only for future reference, but to loan out to family and friends who ask about getting started with gardening. The author draws on her background as an ecologist, as well as a decade's worth of gardening experience on her own homestead, to put together this clear and practical guide to building good soil. Her garden speaks for itself (just check out the pictures on her blog if you're still on the fence!) Highly recommended.

I have read a number of Anna's books and can say that they are a delight to read. I almost feel like she is sitting with me telling it! They are always very straight forward and to the point. No waffling. I would highly recommend any of her books as being a worth while read.

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The Ultimate Guide to Soil: The Real Dirt on Cultivating Crops, Compost, and a Healthier Home The

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