

Pure Prairie Organics

Hi Everyone!

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Add some bone meal, gypsum and lime for minerals and let it digest for next springtime when the plants begin their push.

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I do recommend cutting the grass short for the final cut of the year but we can do that around Thanksgiving. Long grass that gets trapped under a lot of snow will get snow mold and short grass does not get that problem so bad.

Snow mold will not kill the roots, just the tops. Next spring, if you see your grass laying flat in one direction and looking slimy then just take the leaf rake and rake against the grain to stand the grass back up and allow air to circulate thru the blades of grass. This will stop any mold that might be active.

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Make sure to get some sugar and gypsum down on the lawn to prevent dog urine spots next spring. Gypsum will also neutralize road salt so a good application at Thanksgiving and at Easter will do a lot to control crabgrass.

That's all for now... Happy Holidays and best wishes to your families!

Happy gardening, :-)

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My suggested recipe for fertilizing a lawn of 4,000 sq ft, done every two months;

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- 6) Stop using killer chemicals! Plants don't have a stomach, so the digestion has to happen in the soil. Killer chemicals are hostile to the microbes that digest food for the plants. This will encourage the growth of pathogens (bad microbes) which will attack an already weakened plant. Spot spray weeds instead or, for larger yards, just spray once in April for dandelions. The rest of the year is not too bad. Liquid weed killers are better than dry because they are absorbed in the leaf and stay out of the soil. Dry killer chemicals get in the soil and do a lot of damage.
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Thank you!

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There are many products available in our homes or widely available in stores that actually work very well for solving gardening problems. Or I could title this; "Why every gardener should be using vinegar, yogurt, ammonia and molasses!" Here are some recipes that will get results for you. Happy gardening!

- 1) Liquid fertilizer that works better than Miracle Gro; Two ounces household ammonia with two ounces blackstrap molasses mixed into one gallon of water. ~ Water the soil with this mix each week. Please keep the ammonia off of the leaves. House plants and perennials can be fertilized every two weeks but annuals and vegetables absolutely need to be fed each week. They are very heavy feeders.
- 2) Dry fertilizer for lawns and flower beds; One bag of gypsum, (40#) one bag of Scott's Organic Choice fertilizer (40#), and one bag of Milorganite (40#). Put a tarp in the driveway and pour all three bags together and mix with a shovel and use a bucket to scoop into your spreader. This will feed 4000 sq ft and should be applied every two months (eight weeks). This mix produces very good results and can be used on; turf; annuals, trees, shrubs, ground cover, perennials, bulbs, roses and all containers. For vegetables I would remove the Milorganite and use it that way.
- 3) Dry fertilizer #2 for roses, vegetables, and flowers; One handful of rabbit pellets (alfalfa meal), one handful of bonemeal for each plant applied every two months and watered in with the ammonia- molasses mix.
- 4) Bio- dethatch and compost starter; Two ounces of yogurt or two ounces of kefir per gallon of water. I recommend using a Miracle Gro sprayer and we just put the kefir in the jar, add water so it will dissolve and spray away.
- 5) Alfalfa sun tea; Put a few handfuls of rabbit food (alfalfa meal) in an old stocking and use it like a tea bag, soaking it in a bucket of water for a week or two. Mix equal amounts of the alfalfa tea with the ammonia and molasses and apply to the soil. For foliar feeding, use alfalfa tea by itself or mix with molasses (one or two ounces of each per gallon of spray.) This mix will prevent most insect and disease problems.
- 6) Starter fertilizer; alfalfa and molasses are world class starter fertilizers. Much better than the chemical mixes. Use the liquid mix as described above or the dry mix #2 that described above. Also give each plant a handful of gypsum.
- 7) Insecticide; Two ounces of molasses or powdered sugar per gallon of water sprayed on the leaves. Insects don't have a pancreas so they cannot make insulin, When insects eat sugar, it ferments in their stomach. The byproduct of fermentation is alcohol and the insect dies of alcohol poisoning.
- 8) Fungicide; The yogurt/ kefir mix described above is high in Lactobacillus bacteria which can out-compete bad microbes for food and space. It doesn't kill the bad pathogens directly but it will take food and space away from them. Vinegar is a good fungicide. Two or three ounces per gallon of water and sprayed on the leaves. Diseases are a calcium, potassium and copper deficiency so please do not rely on fungicides alone. Diseases are indicators of an underlying malnutrition.

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- 7) Labor Day is the best time for seeding. Grass needs one year to mature. Seeding in the spring, we get more top growth. Seeding in the autumn, we get more root growth. Spring seeded grass is 2 to 3 month old baby grass plants going into July with a small root system. Autumn seeded lawns are 10 months~old going into July. Big difference. Also, September and October are cooler than summertime so we don't need to water as much and the soil is still warm from summer which encourages the seed to germinate.
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[www.aplabs.com](http://www.aplabs.com) Soils testing for \$25. A high quality test that will tell you what is available to the crops right now. This is where I send soil samples. Also, look under 'products'. Their liquid fertilizer called 'Amaze' is highly recommended. Also RL-37 is a highly recommended humic acid. (carbon source that will loosen clay)

[www.nevtunesharvest.com](http://www.nevtunesharvest.com) Nice fish fertilizer from an ocean source (more minerals) and has very little smell because it was cold processed with enzymes. The seaweed is also a good product. They have a humic acid but it is not as good as the one from Ag Labs.

## **Mulch.**

I recommend hardwood and pine. Stay away from cedar, cypress, and the colored stuff. I really love "double grind" which is the local wood chips run thru the grinder a second time so the pieces are smaller. It is very affordable and works well. Look in the yellow pages under mulch.

Happy gardening!

Bill Scheffler  
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PO Box 1458  
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### Bill's Top Ten Tips To Terrific Turf

- 1) Mow high! The longer the grass, the longer the roots. By raising the mower to the top setting (3½ inches), we can cut our watering in half and we will have half the weeds as the person mowing at 2½ inches.
- 2) Water the lawn for one hour, once per week from mid- September to Halloween. In the autumn, plants are getting ready for winter by storing food in their roots and they need water to make their food. September and October are usually our driest months. If it rains then we are fine and don't need to water for that week. Keep the garden hoses out until Halloween! Everything we do in autumn will show up in spring. Lawns that have been watered and fed in autumn will green up 2 to 4 weeks earlier than lawns that have not been fed or watered.
- 3) Grass is a full sun plant. Even the "shade tolerant" grasses need 5 hours of full sun. The other grasses need 8 hours of full sun. Shaded areas should be mulched. Trees like mulch.
- 4) Fertilizing definitely helps. Altho we live in the Prairie State, it definitely helps to fertilize the lawn. Native prairie plants are 3 to 4 feet high with long roots which can forage for food. We mow our lawns which keeps the roots shorter. By feeding our lawns, the soil can support more grass which thickens the lawn. If we do not feed our grass, we will still have a lawn but it will be thin and probably have more weeds.
- 5) Apply gypsum every year. The rule of thumb for gypsum is one bag per 1,000 sq ft per year. We can apply half in spring and half in autumn or every few months during the growing season. Gypsum opens up clay. Enough said.
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2 oz Apple Cider Vinegar

2 oz Ammonia (non sudsing)

Mix in one gallon of water and do 1x every week. Start this recipe when the plants have been in the ground for about 5 to 6 weeks.

**Weed tea.** Put about a dozen dandelions and thistle in the bottom of plastic garbage can and fill it with water and let it soak for a few days. After a few days it will smell earthy and fresh and act as a soil stimulant. After a week or more it will smell rank. At this stage, the nutrients have decomposed enough that the mix is an actual fertilizer. Use this water every time you water your plants and refill the garbage can when you are done. Apply this water continuously to your plants throughout the garden season.

## **Feeding your plants.**

Here are some items I recommend for feeding your plants;

Foliar feeding; Powdered milk (calcium gluconate), yogurt/kefir (calcium lactate and probiotics), molasses (complex carbs, iron, zinc, potassium), apple cider vinegar (enzymes and acetic acid), weed tea (carbs and minerals and probiotics), liquid fish (complex carbs, oils, minerals, P, amino acids, enzymes, calcium), old honey (complex carbs, some minerals and enzymes) soda pop with phosphoric acid (phosphors)

Soil feeding; Bone meal (calcium, phosphorus, trace minerals), high calcium lime (calcium carbonate), gypsum (calcium sulfate), wood chip mulch (complex carbs and potassium), leaf mold (carbs and P), rabbit food (alfalfa, trace minerals, calcium, phyto- nutrients)

## **Recommended web sites.**

[www.biconet.com](http://www.biconet.com) Bio Control Network. Natural products for controlling problems like; diseases, Japanese beetles, insects, etc. They have traps, repellants, some fertilizers, good advice and great service and prices. Much better than Gardens Alive.

[www.tandjentewrises.com](http://www.tandjentewrises.com) Garden Supplies and advice for homeowners. The garden kit is very good. I use Biovam (probiotic) and the compost tea and yucca with my other mixes.

[www.biozome.com](http://www.biozome.com) I love this probiotic and use lots of it. It makes lots of minerals available in the soil. We can reduce nitrogen by  $\frac{1}{2}$  when we use Biozome. It is also a superior competitor in the soil and will out compete the bad microbes for food and space. Tell Guy I sent you. (He keeps track!) Lots of good advice. Biozome eats DDT in 30 minutes. Same with the other poisons. A paint spill was gone in 30 days. But it is safe for us. An amazing product.

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I do recommend cutting the grass short for the final cut of the year but we can do that around Thanksgiving. Long grass that gets trapped under a lot of snow will get snow mold and short grass does not get that problem so bad.

Snow mold will not kill the roots, just the tops. Next spring, if you see your grass laying flat in one direction and looking slimy then just take the leaf rake and rake against the grain to stand the grass back up and allow air to circulate thru the blades of grass. This will stop any mold that might be active.

Air gets trapped under the snow and green grass will use it up which creates an anaerobic environment under the snow and that is an ideal condition for diseases like mold. That's why it's called snow mold.

It should be ok to do some grass seed if you want to fill in some spots yet this year. The later the better. We don't really want the seed to come up because it will be too young when the freeze comes. It's ok for grass seed to sit dormant over the winter and it will come up first thing in the spring.

Remember, the, grasses need calcium to germinate so keep up with your lime, gypsum and bone meal. Sugar is a good starter fertilizer. It really gets the microbes going and the bathroom of the microbes is directly useable by the roots.

Make sure to get some sugar and gypsum down on the lawn to prevent dog urine spots next spring. Gypsum will also neutralize road salt so a good application at Thanksgiving and at Easter will do a lot to control crabgrass.

That's all for now... Happy Holidays and best wishes to your families!

Happy gardening, :-)

Bill

## **Lawns.**

There are two important points to remember about lawns;

- 1) High quality grasses are heavy feeders. (they need a lot of food)
- 2) High quality grasses need a high calcium soil.

My suggested recipe for fertilizing a lawn of 4,000 sq ft, done every two months;

1- bag Milorganite (36#)

1-bag gypsum (40#)

1-bag high calcium lime (40#)

½ — bag Scott's starter fertilizer (17# bag, so about 8#)

5# of table sugar

Recipe for vegetable that flower and fruit. (not lettuce or spinach or Swiss Chard)

2 oz Blackstrap Molasses

2 oz Apple Cider Vinegar

2 oz Ammonia (non sudsing)

Mix in one gallon of water and do 1x every week. Start this recipe when the plants have been in the ground for about 5 to 6 weeks.

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The lawn is still green which means it is still growing but it is not top growth, it is root growth. There is tremendous activity going on around the roots this time of year. This will continue until the ground freezes, usually sometime in early January.

I do recommend cutting the grass short for the final cut of the year but we can do that around Thanksgiving. Long grass that gets trapped under a lot of snow will get snow mold and short grass does not get that problem so bad.

Snow mold will not kill the roots, just the tops. Next spring, if you see your grass laying flat in one direction and looking slimy then just take the leaf rake and rake against the grain to stand the grass back up and allow air to circulate thru the blades of grass. This will stop any mold that might be active.

Air gets trapped under the snow and green grass will use it up which creates an anaerobic environment under the snow and that is an ideal condition for diseases like mold. That's why it's called snow mold.

It should be ok to do some grass seed if you want to fill in some spots yet this year. The later the better. We don't really want the seed to come up because it will be too young when the freeze comes. It's ok for grass seed to sit dormant over the winter and it will come up first thing in the spring.

Remember, the, grasses need calcium to germinate so keep up with your lime, gypsum and bone meal. Sugar is a good starter fertilizer. It really gets the microbes going and the bathroom of the microbes is directly useable by the roots.

Make sure to get some sugar and gypsum down on the lawn to prevent dog urine spots next spring. Gypsum will also neutralize road salt so a good application at Thanksgiving and at Easter will do a lot to control crabgrass.

That's all for now... Happy Holidays and best wishes to your families!

Happy gardening, :-)

Bill

## **Lawns.**

There are two important points to remember about lawns;

- 1) High quality grasses are heavy feeders. (they need a lot of food)
- 2) High quality grasses need a high calcium soil.

My suggested recipe for fertilizing a lawn of 4,000 sq ft, done every two months;

1- bag Milorganite (36#)

1-bag gypsum (40#)

1-bag high calcium lime (40#)

½ — bag Scott's starter fertilizer (17# bag, so about 8#)

5# of table sugar

Recipe for vegetable that flower and fruit. (not lettuce or spinach or Swiss Chard)

2 oz Blackstrap Molasses

2 oz Apple Cider Vinegar

2 oz Ammonia (non sudsing)

Mix in one gallon of water and do 1x every week. Start this recipe when the plants have been in the ground for about 5 to 6 weeks.

**Weed tea.** Put about a dozen dandelions and thistle in the bottom of plastic garbage can and fill it with water and let it soak for a few days. After a few days it will smell earthy and fresh and act as a soil stimulant. After a week or more it will smell rank. At this stage, the nutrients have decomposed enough that the mix is an actual fertilizer. Use this water every time you water your plants and refill the garbage can when you are done. Apply this water continuously to your plants throughout the garden season.

## **Feeding your plants.**

Here are some items I recommend for feeding your plants;

Foliar feeding; Powdered milk (calcium gluconate), yogurt/kefir (calcium lactate and probiotics), molasses (complex carbs, iron, zinc, potassium), apple cider vinegar (enzymes and acetic acid), weed tea (carbs and minerals and probiotics), liquid fish (complex carbs, oils, minerals, P, amino acids, enzymes, calcium), old honey (complex carbs, some minerals and enzymes) soda pop with phosphoric acid (phosphors)

Soil feeding; Bone meal (calcium, phosphorus, trace minerals), high calcium lime (calcium carbonate), gypsum (calcium sulfate), wood chip mulch (complex carbs and potassium), leaf mold (carbs and P), rabbit food (alfalfa, trace minerals, calcium, phyto- nutrients)

## **Recommended web sites.**

[www.biconet.com](http://www.biconet.com) Bio Control Network. Natural products for controlling problems like; diseases, Japanese beetles, insects, etc. They have traps, repellants, some fertilizers, good advice and great service and prices. Much better than Gardens Alive.

[www.tandjentewrises.com](http://www.tandjentewrises.com) Garden Supplies and advice for homeowners. The garden kit is very good. I use Biovam (probiotic) and the compost tea and yucca with my other mixes.

[www.biozome.com](http://www.biozome.com) I love this probiotic and use lots of it. It makes lots of minerals available in the soil. We can reduce nitrogen by  $\frac{1}{2}$  when we use Biozome. It is also a superior competitor in the soil and will out compete the bad microbes for food and space. Tell Guy I sent you. (He keeps track!) Lots of good advice. Biozome eats DDT in 30 minutes. Same with the other poisons. A paint spill was gone in 30 days. But it is safe for us. An amazing product.

<http://attra.ncat.org> An amazing information source for organic/natural/alternative farming and gardening. Don't even try to look everything up. You could spend weeks reading on this site. Hundreds of thousands of pages, I'm sure. They have information on just about anything; companion plants, fertilizers, cover crops, mulch, compost, insects, saving seeds, canning/preserves/rootcellaring, beekeeping, fermented foods pickles/kim chee/yogurt) and all this for almost any crop; veggies, fruits (berries! tree fruits), bulbs (garlic/onion), pastures, livestock (bees, chickens (eggs or meat), cow (dairy and beef), goats (milk and meat), sheep (meat/wool/milk). Anyway, you get the idea.

[www.aplabs.com](http://www.aplabs.com) Soils testing for \$25. A high quality test that will tell you what is available to the crops right now. This is where I send soil samples. Also, look under 'products'. Their liquid fertilizer called 'Amaze' is highly recommended. Also RL-37 is a highly recommended humic acid. (carbon source that will loosen clay)

[www.nevtunesharvest.com](http://www.nevtunesharvest.com) Nice fish fertilizer from an ocean source (more minerals) and has very little smell because it was cold processed with enzymes. The seaweed is also a good product. They have a humic acid but it is not as good as the one from Ag Labs.

## **Mulch.**

I recommend hardwood and pine. Stay away from cedar, cypress, and the colored stuff. I really love "double grind" which is the local wood chips run thru the grinder a second time so the pieces are smaller. It is very affordable and works well. Look in the yellow pages under mulch.

Happy gardening!

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### Bill's Top Ten Tips To Terrific Turf

- 1) Mow high! The longer the grass, the longer the roots. By raising the mower to the top setting (3½ inches), we can cut our watering in half and we will have half the weeds as the person mowing at 2½ inches.
- 2) Water the lawn for one hour, once per week from mid- September to Halloween. In the autumn, plants are getting ready for winter by storing food in their roots and they need water to make their food. September and October are usually our driest months. If it rains then we are fine and don't need to water for that week. Keep the garden hoses out until Halloween! Everything we do in autumn will show up in spring. Lawns that have been watered and fed in autumn will green up 2 to 4 weeks earlier than lawns that have not been fed or watered.
- 3) Grass is a full sun plant. Even the "shade tolerant" grasses need 5 hours of full sun. The other grasses need 8 hours of full sun. Shaded areas should be mulched. Trees like mulch.
- 4) Fertilizing definitely helps. Altho we live in the Prairie State, it definitely helps to fertilize the lawn. Native prairie plants are 3 to 4 feet high with long roots which can forage for food. We mow our lawns which keeps the roots shorter. By feeding our lawns, the soil can support more grass which thickens the lawn. If we do not feed our grass, we will still have a lawn but it will be thin and probably have more weeds.
- 5) Apply gypsum every year. The rule of thumb for gypsum is one bag per 1,000 sq ft per year. We can apply half in spring and half in autumn or every few months during the growing season. Gypsum opens up clay. Enough said.
- 6) Stop using killer chemicals! Plants don't have a stomach, so the digestion has to happen in the soil. Killer chemicals are hostile to the microbes that digest food for the plants. This will encourage the growth of pathogens (bad microbes) which will attack an already weakened plant. Spot spray weeds instead or, for larger yards, just spray once in April for dandelions. The rest of the year is not too bad. Liquid weed killers are better than dry because they are absorbed in the leaf and stay out of the soil. Dry killer chemicals get in the soil and do a lot of damage.
- 7) Labor Day is the best time for seeding. Grass needs one year to mature. Seeding in the spring, we get more top growth. Seeding in the autumn, we get more root growth. Spring seeded grass is 2 to 3 month old baby grass plants going into July with a small root system. Autumn seeded lawns are 10 months~old going into July. Big difference. Also, September and October are cooler than summertime so we don't need to water as much and the soil is still warm from summer which encourages the seed to germinate.
- 8) Gypsum controls crabgrass. Crabgrass only germinates where there is salt. Gypsum neutralizes salt. Gypsum is a better crabgrass preemergent than the chemicals are. Usually crabgrass is found along the roadside where the snowplow pushes the salt and also along the driveway, where the salt melts off our tires. Apply one bag along the parkway on Thanksgiving and again at Easter. Do the same along the driveway. It may take a few years to get results but keep at it until the crabgrass disappears on its own without any digging and the natural grass will begin to fill in. Buy stock in U. S. Gypsum.
- 9) Do not aerate or dethatch by machine. They don't work and it's messy and expensive. One bag of gypsum and two pounds of sugar will do more to aerate the soil than any machine can do. We WANT a ¼ inch or 3/4 inch of thatch! It will help hold in moisture so the lawn doesn't dry out so fast and it will prevent weeds by shading the soil. Weed seeds need sunlight to germinate. Thatch= shade= fewer weeds and less watering. You can do this. Just leave the clippings on the lawn and no one gets hurt. If you have more than one inch of thatch, then spray Stoneyfield yogurt, or better yet, some kefir, with active cultures in it. Lactobacillus bacteria is a world class bio- dethatch. It will turn your thatch into topsoil. Much better than having someone beat up your lawn and then pay to haul it away.
- 10) Plants need carbs. Organic fertilizers work best but if we must use chemical fertilizers, then add a bag of gypsum and two pounds of sugar and it will work much better. Use the fertilizers without the killer chemicals.

Thank you!

Bill Scheffler, owner  
pure-prairie-organics.com

Helpful Recipes for Better Gardening  
by Bill Scheffler, owner  
Pure Prairie Organics

There are many products available in our homes or widely available in stores that actually work very well for solving gardening problems. Or I could title this; "Why every gardener should be using vinegar, yogurt, ammonia and molasses!" Here are some recipes that will get results for you. Happy gardening!

- 1) Liquid fertilizer that works better than Miracle Gro; Two ounces household ammonia with two ounces blackstrap molasses mixed into one gallon of water. ~ Water the soil with this mix each week. Please keep the ammonia off of the leaves. House plants and perennials can be fertilized every two weeks but annuals and vegetables absolutely need to be fed each week. They are very heavy feeders.
- 2) Dry fertilizer for lawns and flower beds; One bag of gypsum, (40#) one bag of Scott's Organic Choice fertilizer (40#), and one bag of Milorganite (40#). Put a tarp in the driveway and pour all three bags together and mix with a shovel and use a bucket to scoop into your spreader. This will feed 4000 sq ft and should be applied every two months (eight weeks). This mix produces very good results and can be used on; turf; annuals, trees, shrubs, ground cover, perennials, bulbs, roses and all containers. For vegetables I would remove the Milorganite and use it that way.
- 3) Dry fertilizer #2 for roses, vegetables, and flowers; One handful of rabbit pellets (alfalfa meal), one handful of bonemeal for each plant applied every two months and watered in with the ammonia- molasses mix.
- 4) Bio- dethatch and compost starter; Two ounces of yogurt or two ounces of kefir per gallon of water. I recommend using a Miracle Gro sprayer and we just put the kefir in the jar, add water so it will dissolve and spray away.
- 5) Alfalfa sun tea; Put a few handfuls of rabbit food (alfalfa meal) in an old stocking and use it like a tea bag, soaking it in a bucket of water for a week or two. Mix equal amounts of the alfalfa tea with the ammonia and molasses and apply to the soil. For foliar feeding, use alfalfa tea by itself or mix with molasses (one or two ounces of each per gallon of spray.) This mix will prevent most insect and disease problems.
- 6) Starter fertilizer; alfalfa and molasses are world class starter fertilizers. Much better than the chemical mixes. Use the liquid mix as described above or the dry mix #2 that described above. Also give each plant a handful of gypsum.
- 7) Insecticide; Two ounces of molasses or powdered sugar per gallon of water sprayed on the leaves. Insects don't have a pancreas so they cannot make insulin, When insects eat sugar, it ferments in their stomach. The byproduct of fermentation is alcohol and the insect dies of alcohol poisoning.
- 8) Fungicide; The yogurt/ kefir mix described above is high in Lactobacillus bacteria which can out-compete bad microbes for food and space. It doesn't kill the bad pathogens directly but it will take food and space away from them. Vinegar is a good fungicide. Two or three ounces per gallon of water and sprayed on the leaves. Diseases are a calcium, potassium and copper deficiency so please do not rely on fungicides alone. Diseases are indicators of an underlying malnutrition.