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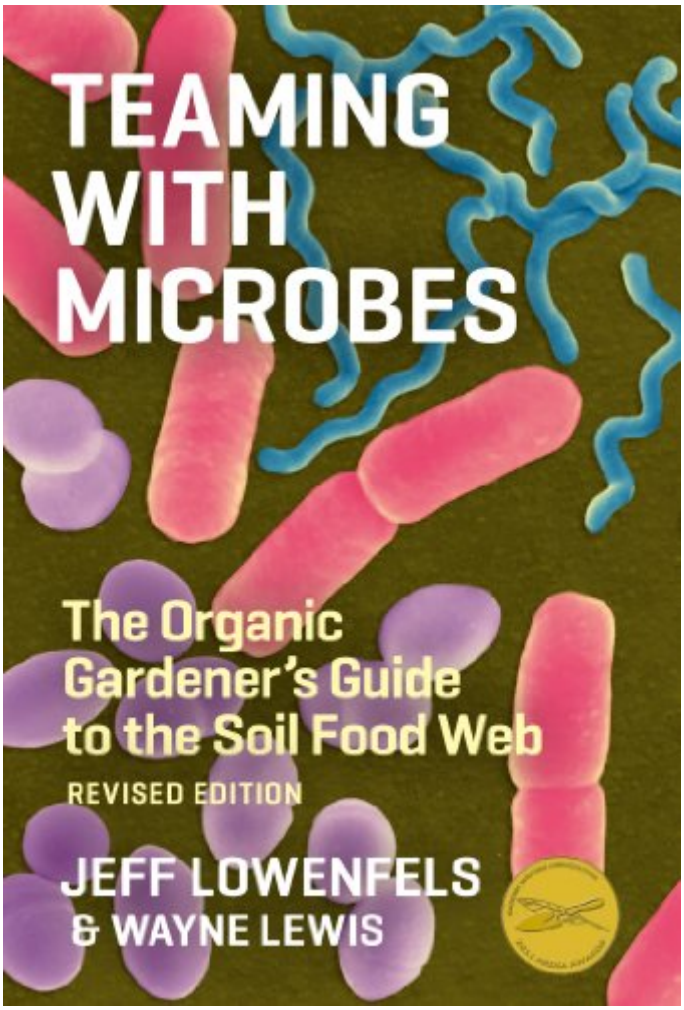
# Teaming With Microbes: The Organic Gardener's Guide To The Soil Food Web, Revised Edition (Science For Gardeners)

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## Synopsis

Healthy soil teems with lifeâ ”not just earthworms and insects, but a staggering multitude of bacteria, fungi, and other microorganisms. Chemical fertilizers injure the microbial life that sustains healthy plants, and the soil becomes increasingly dependent on artificial, often toxic, substances. But there is an alternative: by strengthening the soil food webâ ”the complex world of soil-dwelling organismsâ ”gardeners can create a nurturing environment for plants. Teaming with Microbes extols the benefits of cultivating the soil food web. It clearly explains the activities and organisms that make up the web, and explains how gardeners can cultivate the life of the soil through the use of compost, mulches, and compost tea. With Jeff Lowenfelsâ ™ help, everyoneâ ”from devotees of organic gardening techniques to weekend gardeners who simply want to grow healthy, vigorous plantsâ ”can create rich, nurturing, living soil.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a very nice book. It is very informative for the audience for which it was intended --new people to organic gardening or organic gardeners new to this way of building up the soil organically

with as little soil disturbance as possible while working along with nature. The first half of the book discusses how the soil food web works. The second half of the book discusses ways to accomplish building up the soil organically without harsh chemicals.

Great book, the first half covers the soil biology to a degree that some may consider boring, but to me really opened up the door to learning about the vast complexity of the ecosystems underground, and what makes them thrive.Only thing I wish they had gone into detail more on was the compost teas; They talk briefly about cell counts in varying teas but dont show how to extrapolste that by using a microscope (yes some people are that into this). They even encourage the reader to purchase a microscope (and even link one sold on ), but give no instruction on how to utilize the newly purchased instrument to better your gardening.Overall, though, the book is a great introduction to the soil food web and how everything in gardening is interconnected, above ground, or below.

When I asked Elaine Ingham what would be the best starting point for someone who knew nothing about the soil food web I'd just heard her talk about, she recommended this book. I'm glad I took her advice. "Teaming with Microbes" is very readable, only technical when it really needs to be, and is full of great information for the novice organic gardener, like me! It also has a great list of references for further exploration, and the easy to understand "Rules" are helpful reminders of the advice given in the text, I highly recommend this book for those interested in beginning to learn how to make the most of soil biology in the home garden or small organic farm.

WOW. I can't put this book down! I'm flashing back to high school biology and wondering why it was so shallow and simplistic. This explains the inner workings of plants in such detail! It is complex and I catch myself having to reread paragraphs, and I have trouble remembering the terms, but the understanding I'm gaining is tremendous. I'm convinced this knowledge will have practical applications in my garden. I can't wait to start his other 'Teaming With Nutrients' book.

Really enjoyed the book. Learned a lot. Most of the material in the book was new to me, and very worthwhile. I would have given it five stars, but I think the book comes up a little short in real-world application. I understand the concepts of a good soil food web and the disadvantages of chemicals and tilling and how this negatively impacts the soil. The authors didn't seem to offer any ideas on controlling grasses and weeds, other than by mulching, and I suppose pulling by hand. In my

garden grasses and weeds can’t be controlled by constantly pulling them, unless I want to dedicate 12 or more hours per day to the task (and I don’t). I think the principles in the book can be applied properly on a very small scale. I have two 5700 sq ft garden areas. Not a farming operation, but larger scale gardening than most people attempt. Tilling the areas in the spring gives me a fighting chance against weeds and grasses. No amount of mulching seems to control the field grass in the gardens unless the ground is turned and tilled. After reading the book I was still scratching my head about that and looking forward to tilling in the spring. Otherwise I found the book to be excellent.

Great way to get a basic understanding of the soil food web and the microbes that inhabitate it. Is a must have for every person who considers themselves a gardner.

We are not alone in this magnificent Universe. Microbes from across the Universe is how the Planet Earth became populated with Life. We have a symbiotic relationship with each other. Microbes play an important role in our development to higher consciousness. Anyone interested in understanding how plants and animals grow and thrive on earth with the help of Microbes need to read this book. Life on Earth depend upon microbes to convert and change organic matter into an ionic substance so that plants and animals can absorb the nutrition into our cells to create more complex molecules to keep us healthy and strong. Jeff Lowenfels does a great job at keeping it simple enough for an organic gardener to understand such a complex system.

I think most gardeners who are serious about the sport/hobby/obsession of plant growing and nurturing will enjoy this book. It adds a layer of "why" to the things we all do. You know you fertilize, but understanding the microbiology helps you understand WHY this plant might want this type and others might like another. It also takes the art/science of composting to a much more interesting (to me) level.As some other reviewers pointed out already, the first half of the book does get a tad boring, (but still densely packed with useful information!!) but I dealt with that by skipping to the back half of the book and then coming back to the portions I skipped and taking them in smaller does broken up by more zippy reading.I do not want to give the impression the first half of the book is badly written or anything, it is just information dense, and like a text book it gets a little boring here and there if you do not take a break. At least for me.I am eagerly anticipating making my gardens some lovely compost tea this spring, inspired by this most excellent book. I had been composting for years, and was not really sold on the need to go the extra mile and make tea, but these authors have sold me on taking the time for a garden tea party.

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