



## How to use Corn Gluten Meal

### How it works

Corn gluten meal works by inhibiting the root formation of germinating plants. It is pre-emergence control of weeds only, there is no post-emergence effect on established weeds. Corn gluten meal is a natural substitute for synthetic pre-emergence herbicides. Pre-emergence herbicides attack seeds while they're still in the ground, before the seedlings emerge from the soil. Corn gluten meal is a by-product of commercial corn milling that contains the protein fraction of the corn.

The use of corn gluten meal as an herbicide was discovered during turf grass research at Iowa State University. It was observed to prevent grass seeds from sprouting. Further research has shown that it also effectively prevents other seeds from sprouting, including seeds from many weeds such as crabgrass and dandelions.

Corn gluten meal is effective only against seeds, not existing plants. Annual weeds that are already up and growing will not be killed by corn gluten meal. Existing perennial weeds such as quackgrass, plantain and dandelions won't be damaged by corn gluten meal. And, they'll still come back from one year to the next because their roots survive most winters. What corn gluten meal will do is stop the seeds they shed each summer, so the population of these particular weeds won't increase. In fact, because some will die of natural causes, their numbers should actually decrease after several years of consistent corn gluten meal use. ***By the fourth year of use twice a season, spring and mid-August, good weed control is usually achieved.***

### It fertilizes too

Corn gluten meal is generally about 10% nitrogen and it serves as a good fertilizer promoting leaf growth. The nitrogen will release slowly over a 3 to 4 month period after application.

### How & when to apply corn gluten meal to lawns

Corn gluten meal is available in powdered and pelletized forms and the pelletized form is easier to use. *Apply corn gluten meal first in late April/early May, then a second time around mid-August.* Water it lightly into the soil in order to activate it. The corn gluten meal should remain effective for five to six weeks each time you apply it.

Most annual and perennial weed seeds sprout in spring or early summer, but there are a number of "winter annuals" that may sprout either in spring or fall. When these seeds sprout in fall, their roots live over winter, giving them a head start the following spring. By the end of that growing season, they die, just like other annuals. Because of these winter annuals, *you should apply corn gluten meal to the lawn in late summer as well as spring.*

### Flower & Vegetable Garden Applications

Corn gluten meal may be used safely in gardens around established perennial plants, to keep weed seeds from sprouting. It can also be used after transplants have been in the soil long enough to have "taken hold." Wait until seedlings are up and growing well before applying corn gluten meal to flower or vegetable gardens where seeds were sown directly into the soil.

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