



CHANGING HYDRANGEA BLOSSOM COLOR

An interesting aspect of hydrangeas is that it is the soil pH that often determines flower color. Blue flowers are produced in acid soil and pink in alkaline soils.

Fertilizer will not change the color of the blooms. It's possible that extra ingredients added to fertilizers might change the color, but the fertilizer itself doesn't have this power.

For:

Blue flowers

Increase acidity by soaking the soil with ¼ cup aluminum sulfate dissolved in a gallon of water at weekly intervals in spring and fall.

Pink or reddish flowers,

make soil more alkaline by applying lime once or twice a year at the rate of 1 pound per 10 square feet.

It can be noted here that to achieve a purple flower you must have the pH right in the middle of the aforementioned formulas. Keep in mind though only the deep blue & the deep pink or reddish blooms can become purple. The light pink or light blue blooms will become lavender in the same soil pH.

All treatments must be started well ahead of the blooming period.

Hydrangeas in containers are better candidates for this experiment as there is more control of the soil situation.

Keep in mind that not all hydrangeas color is affected by the pH in the soil. Peegee (paniculata pan-ic-u-lata) & Oak leaf (quercifolia kwer-sih-FOE-lee-uh) are two. If you have a white hydrangea.....you have a white hydrangea, period.

COLOR CHANGING REFERENCE LINKS

(UCMG article)

http://ucanr.edu/sites/uc_master_gardeners/files/141657.pdf

(US National Arboretum site)

<http://www.usna.usda.gov/Gardens/faqs/hydrangeafaq2.html>