

High Brix Gardens Whassat?

You missed it, didn't you—your new bible on growing a high brix garden.

For those of you who haven't made a pilgrimage to Alaska Sea-Ag's fertilizer trailer near Palmer, you've missed marvelous array of soil-enhancing amendments, and Bob & Christine Greig's experienced advice to go with it. Then you'd get your free copy of that delightful, instructive booklet when you visited, too, called High Brix Gardens.

What's "brix," anyhow? Brix is a quick scientific measurement of the sugar levels of your vegetables and fruits. Brix is measured by squeezing 2 drops of plant juice on a cigar-sized instrument with a prism. You read a scale that tells you the sugar content. The bigger the brix number, the more plant sugar within. Who cares? You do, for two reasons.

First, brix is your mid-summer report card. This is the composite measure of your adeptness at providing your soil and crops what they need for maximum resilience, vitality, pest and disease resistance, trace mineral content, and a healthy balance of macro-nutrients.

Second, brix determines whether or not you can get your kids to eat vegetables! The higher the sugar level, the better the flavor. We're talking exhilarating taste—not disappointing bitterness or blah-ness. The brix number also indicates nutrient density. If you have a high brix reading, you know you have created the conditions for optimal vitamin, mineral, and enzyme content in your fruits and veggies. When you eat them, you benefit from their health and vitality. Here is the direct connection from your soil and crop health to your human health.

Locally produced food is no better than imports if it lacks vital nutrients. Ailing vegetable and fruit rescued by toxic chemicals is not healthy for anybody.

You can take matters of health into your own hands by choosing to grow some of your food. You can now strive for high brix in your crops. You can boost your health from your home-grown harvest. At the same time, high brix translates into less weed, insect, and disease problems for your garden or farm plot.

So brix is ultimate in-the-field test of your crops' progress as they grow. Do I recommend that you purchase the refractometer instrument and monitor your crops? No, but I do recommend that booklet. It tells you how to achieve high brix without buying the measuring stick.

How? To grow for high brix, put all parts of sustainable growing together. In short, build healthy, living soil. This means aim for balanced NPK, substantial calcium levels, proper calcium/magnesium ratio, adequate trace minerals, biologically active soil, microbial inoculants, and life-friendly practices. Get a soil test with a company that uses the Morgan Extract method, and follow the recommendations conscientiously.

But since you missed this excellent little growing guide, here's how to send for your own booklet. I predict you'll enjoy it immensely, and dash right out to improve your Victory Garden, Recovery Garden, or whatever you call your local food-growing project out there in your yard.

Request **High Brix Gardens** free booklet by writing, calling, or e-mailing International Ag Labs, Inc., 800 W. Lake Ave, Fairmont, MN 56031, 507-235-6909, info@aglabs.com; www.aglabs.com; www.highbrixgardens.com