



Plant Potions



Comfrey feed

- Harvest comfrey leaves from the base of established plants. The hairy leaves can irritate the skin, so wear gloves if necessary.
- Remove flowers and tough stems, then chop up the leaves and pack them tightly into a water-tight container. If possible, choose a container with a lid, as the solution can smell as the leaves break down. Use a brick to weigh down the leaves.
- Check on the progress every few weeks. The leaves will break down gradually, releasing a smelly brown liquid. Top up with fresh leaves and collect any liquid, storing it in a cool, dark place.
- Dilute the collected liquid at a rate of one part comfrey to 10 parts water - the darker it is, the more you'll need to dilute it. Use the solution as a potassium-rich liquid fertiliser to encourage flowers and fruit set.

You can also make a liquid feed using the leaves of bracken, clover, groundsel, nettles, borage, chicory and strawberries



Calendula salve



These quantities made 540ml of salve which we put in 60ml glass jars; you can scale the recipe up or down.

- You'll need a double boiler (a smaller saucepan inside a bigger one works fine).
- You'll need some muslin and a sieve or colander with a bowl to strain the flowers from the oil.
- 21 fresh heads of young calendula flowers
- 600ml of olive oil, preferably organic, extra-virgin not necessary
- 60g of beeswax chips
- Pick the heads from young plants preferably early morning on a dry day just after any dew has evaporated. This is designed to ensure the maximum active ingredients are in the oils of the petals.
- Pick the petals off the flower heads and place the petals in the smaller of your two saucepans. Cover in the olive oil and give a good stir to make sure all the petals are well coated in the oil.
- Put some boiling water in the larger saucepan and bring to a gentle simmer. What you are going to do is gently heat the oil/petal mix so that the active ingredients in the petals (which are oil soluble) transfer to the olive oil. This is called maceration. The simmering water will never come above 100°C and the gentle simmer will be less than this.
- Place the smaller saucepan into the bigger pan and heat for 3-4 hours.
- Take off the heat and strain the oil from the petals into a bowl using the muslin inside a sieve or colander. Squeeze the muslin to get the most oil out. The oil should have taken on the vibrant colour of the Calendula.
- Put the oil back into the smaller saucepan and place this pan back into the gently simmering water.
- Put the beeswax chips into the oil and stir gently until the beeswax is melted and thoroughly combined with the oil. The beeswax will help the oil set into a nice salve and has good soothing properties of its own.
- Then carefully pour your salve into the glass jars and pop on the lids.
- After a little while the salve will have set. Store your salve in a cool dark place.

