

# Alpaca & Llama Manure Benefits

Llama manure is lower in organic matter content than manures of most other barnyard livestock (like cows, horses and sheep)—but it still has plenty to improve soil texture and water-holding capacity. This lower organic content allows llama manure to be spread directly onto plants without fear of 'burning' them. It is the decomposition of organic matter which produces the heat that can damage plant roots.

Compared to the other barnyard animals, the nitrogen and potassium content of llama droppings is comparatively high, an indication of good fertilizer value. (Nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium are the major plant nutrients; they are the familiar N-P-K on

fertilizer bags.) Phosphorus is relatively low, but it is low in most other livestock manure as well. Calcium and magnesium content is about average. Salt content is not too high but it is high enough that one should not apply llama poop directly onto seedlings or mix improperly into the soil. Overall, llama manure is a great organic fertilizer. Of course, organic fertilizers are usually lower in nutrient content than synthetic fertilizers, so more needs to be applied to get the same amount of nutrients. For example, llama manure would be about 1.5-0.2-1.1 versus the 20-10-5 of synthetic fertilizer. Apply about 13 times as much llama manure to get the same amount of nitrogen.

## Animal Manure Comparison

Animal	% N Nitrogen	% P Phosphorus	% K Potassium
Alpaca/Llama	1.7	0.69	0.66
Chicken	1.0	0.8	0.4
Horse	0.7	0.25	0.55
Sheep	0.95	0.35	1.0
Cow	0.6	0.15	0.45
Pig	0.5	0.35	0.4

## How to Use and Store Alpaca & Llama Beans

Llama beans can be used directly in your garden without danger of burning plants. If the beans aren't kept moist they will harden and form a white crust taking longer to break down. My favorite way to store them is to moisten them (damp not dripping, like you do compost) and keep them well covered. During the first couple of days check and remoisten if needed (it will depend on how dry they are when you start this process). In a little over a month the beans will break down and look like moist rich peat moss, ready to amend your garden.

**CQ**

## Source:

*High Desert Organic Gardeners  
HiDOG of Silver City & Grant County  
New Mexico*