Amendments for Improving Urban Soils.

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Abstract. Locally-generated wastes (biosolids, green/yard trimmings, food residuals; composted and/or digested) can be an economically viable and agronomically valuable source of organic matter and nutrients for disturbed, sometimes contaminated urban soils. Our research-extension program is beginning a project that will test the value of such products in urban agricultural soils at community gardens in Blacksburg, Washington, DC, and Maryland. We will additionally use these sites to extend educational programs on assessing and remediating urban soils for safe and productive gardening.

Summary of presentation by Greg Evanylo. I briefly described the types of chemical (pollutants) and physical (compaction, water holding capacity, plant available water, infiltration/runoff) limitations that are common in disturbed urban soils and the value of various inorganic and organic amendments for ameliorating the detrimental effects. The conversation rapidly turned to testing, interpreting, and remediying Pb-enriched soils. The remainder of the session dealt with addressing soil Pb issues.