



# GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

## SOIL TYPES – BALLARAT DISTRICT

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### WHAT SOIL TYPES ARE TYPICAL IN THE BALLARAT DISTRICT?

Ballarat has two different soil types which are found predominantly throughout the region with minor variations.

Both soil types are acidic, meaning they have a pH level of less than 7 (neutral).

### HOW WILL I KNOW WHICH SOIL TYPE I HAVE?

Your exact soil type will depend on factors such as years of cultivation, existing plants, imported soils, residential development and other natural factors.

For a thorough understanding of your soil, you should take a sample to your local nursery professional for assessment (see fact sheet: Healthy soil – how to take a soil sample).

### ACIDIC VS ALKALINE SOILS

An acidic soil means certain types of plants will perform well. A perfect example is the Camellia which likes an acidic soil. Other plants will not do so well. An example is lavender which prefers an alkaline soil.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY GARDEN?

Soil that is too acidic or has too much alkalinity will result in your plants not getting the nutrients they need.

You will need to apply additives so you can grow specific plants to their maximum health.

**If you have an acidic soil:** To increase alkalinity, add lime (do not overdo it as you may raise the pH level too much).

**If you have an alkaline soil:** To increase acidity, it is best to apply an organic additive (you can also use a product such as ferrous sulphate to further boost levels).

Important: Always apply additives according to the manufacturers recommended dosage because exceeding this can be detrimental to your garden.



### TICKNER'S TIP

Michael Tickner, Adv Cert Hort (read Michael's profile at [www.chw.net.au](http://www.chw.net.au))

"Poultry manure has a high lime content so it makes an excellent organic additive to increase the pH level."

If you have any questions about your soil type, ask your nursery professional for advice.

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[chw.net.au/gyof](http://chw.net.au/gyof)