

# Mineral Fertilisers

## Using natural minerals for fertility...



***Taking a more biological approach to soil fertility requires changing your fertiliser inputs to those that are more soil friendly. These include using mineral fertilisers, also known as rock dusts. This fact sheet provides general information about natural mineral fertilisers...***

### What are mineral fertilisers?

Mineral fertilisers are slow release, natural products generally made by crushing a rock source into small aggregates, sand or dust. Depending upon the mineral content of the rock, a mineral fertiliser will contain a range of different elements that are important for plant growth.

The most common elements found in rocks include silicon and aluminium but they can also contain important plant nutrients such as calcium, potassium and magnesium. Trace elements such as boron, iron, zinc, selenium and copper may also be present.

Rock mineral fertilisers will come in different size particles depending upon how finely they have been crushed.

### Why use mineral fertilisers?

Although conventional chemical fertilisers can bring about impressive short term yield results they can also lead to soil health issues such as acidity and nutrient imbalances.

Conventional fertilisers may also impact negatively on your soil's biology. Biological activity is essential for productive soils.

Mineral fertilisers can overcome some of these negative issues by building and balancing fertility in a way that does not cause damage to the soil biology.

### Common mineral fertilisers

Common mineral fertilisers include crushed granites, crushed basalts, rock phosphates, lime and dolomite.

### How & when to use them

Mineral fertilisers can be spread as a dust or fine powder using a spreader. Ausmin also make a range of granulated mineral products that can be applied with modern planting equipment.

It is recommended to always test your soil to know what nutrients are required and to apply a rock dust that meets your soil's fertility requirements.

Rock dusts can be applied at any time, as they are not highly soluble. Generally the finer the rock particle size the quicker the mineral will release nutrients into your soil.

*Soil biota (micro-organisms) are key agents in releasing nutrients from mineral fertilizers. Encouraging biological activity is essential*

*Many agricultural chemicals will adversely impact on microbial populations. Use chemicals sparingly.*

*Know the nutrients in your soil through a test and choose a mineral fertilizer to meet the needs of your soil & crops.*

**Ausmin has a range of natural minerals that can assist you in your change to a biological way of farming...**