

Buckwheat



Buckwheat is uniquely good at making phosphorous – one of the three main soil nutrients that plants need – more available in the soil, along with nitrogen and potassium. All soils have some phosphorous in an available form that plant roots can absorb, but the majority of soil phosphorous is in an unavailable (insoluble) form that the plants can't access. Buckwheat roots release acidic compounds that help convert some phosphorous from the unavailable to available form.

Besides making phosphorous more available in the soil, many farmers have reported that buckwheat improves the soil by making it easier to till or plant into. For farmers who minimize tillage of their soil, buckwheat, like other cover crops, can contribute to improvement in soil structure. Among cover crops, buckwheat is also known as one of the best for smothering mid-summer weeds and deterring pests.

