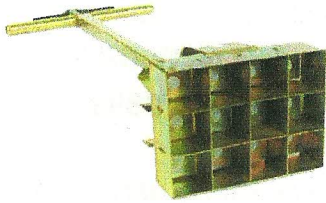


What is a soil block?

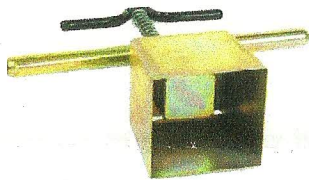
It is a block of growing medium that has been lightly compressed and shaped by a form. A soil block serves as both a container and the soil for starting and growing seedlings, eliminating the need for plastic pots and trays for transplanted seedlings. Seedlings grown in soil blocks form stronger root systems than those grown in containers due to increased oxygen availability to the roots and the soil block's natural tendency to "prune" roots. This creates a substantial advantage when seedlings are transplanted into the field; because of lessened root disruption, they are less prone to transplant shock.

The key to making good soil blocks is to use a mix containing correct proportions of peat, compost, soil, and sand or perlite. A "blocking" mix needs extra fibrous material - peat, to bind the material together and help the block retain moisture. Some commercially available "peat-lite" mixes may work, but are unsuitable for organic use. Johnny's 512 Mix meets organic criteria and is excellent for making professional quality soil blocks. Available in two sizes: **9227** (20 Qt.); **9228** (60 Qt.)

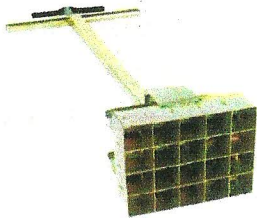
A standard 10-quart bucket is the unit of measurement for the bulk ingredients. A standard cup measure is used for the supplementary ingredients. The following recipe makes approximately 2 bushels of mix.



9015 Stand-up 12-Block Maker.
Makes (12) 2 x 2" blocks.



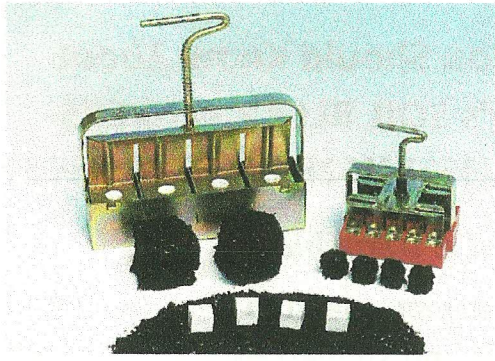
9016 Large Single Block Maker.
Makes (1) 4 x 4" block.



9352 Stand-up 20-Block Maker.
Makes (20) 1.5 x 1.5" blocks.



9530 Stand-up 6-Block Maker.
Makes (6) 2 x 2.5" blocks.



9527 Medium 4-Block Maker. (4) 2 x 2" blocks.

9528 Mini 20-Block Maker. (20) 3/4 x 3/4" blocks.

9529 Soil Block Maker Insert. (4 of each) 3/4 x 3/4" blocks, standard dibbles, screws, and washers.

Blocking Mix Recipe

- 3 buckets brown peat (standard peat moss).
- 1/2 cup Lime. Mix ingredients together thoroughly.
- 2 buckets coarse sand or perlite.
- 3 cups base fertilizer (equal parts mix blood meal, colloidal phosphate and greensand. Mix thoroughly.
- 1 bucket garden soil.
- 2 buckets well-decomposed compost. Mix all ingredients thoroughly. From ***THE NEW ORGANIC GROWER*** by Eliot Coleman (JSS part # 9899)

Moisten the mix thoroughly using one part warm water for every three parts blocking mix. Successful soil block making depends on the mix being wet enough. The mix should have the consistency of soft putty or wet cement, so that a small amount of water oozes through small openings in the blocker as the blocks are made, and that the individual soil blocks cling to the blocker without falling out prematurely.

How to use the Soil Block Maker

Blockers can be used on any flat work surface. Push the prepared soil mix into a mound that is 1-1/4" to 1-1/2" deeper than the height of the soil blocker. Push the blocker into the mix until it strikes the work surface. Twist the blocker a quarter-turn and lift. Set the blocker where you plan to grow your seedlings, such as a wooden or plastic tray, push down on the handle while raising the blocker. Rinse the blocker in warm water before making the next set of blocks. Place the seed into the indentation of each block and cover according to the culture information on our seed packets. Prevent drying by covering blocks with Clear Acrylic Domes (#9519) or a layer of plastic until the seeds have germinated.

Soil Block Maker Insert (#9529)

The 3/4" cube insert is designed to attach easily to the four block maker #9527. This four-block system makes precise depressions that allow the smaller cubes to be produced in the twenty-block blocker (#9528) to be "potted on" to the larger four-block cubes. To attach the soil block maker insert, press the rubber nipple from the soil block maker with your thumb, then attach the insert.

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Fax: 1-800-437-4290

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