



Mould growing in my fermented plant extracts

Posted by [Karen Brindle](#)

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Mould growing in my fermented plant extracts](#)

May 28, 2017 07:40AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 103

Do I need to start over? I harvested nettle, horsetail and comfrey, put them in individual 20gal garbage cans with a little EM and water, then left on a 12 day trip. There was no stirring while I was gone, now there is mould growing on the tops of the plant material that is sticking up above the water line. Will this be ok to strain and still use on my trees, or do I need to throw it out and start over? This did not happen when I brewed last year, first time doing herbal teas. Thanks for your input! and advice!!!!

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

Edited 1 time(s). Last edit at 05/30/2017 02:46AM by Michael Phillips.

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[Michael Phillips](#)

[Re: Mould growing in my fermented plant extracts](#)

May 30, 2017 03:02AM

Moderator

Registered: 11 years ago

Posts: 621

That mold is a harmless distraction taking advantage of an aerobic surface in the floating herbs. The point here is you are making a fermented plant extract for **nutrient availability**. EM and other organisms are certainly involved as this is a fermentation but it's nothing like a true compost tea. The latter is totally about **organism diversity**, brought about by aeration and rapid microbe multiplication to fill the volume with beneficial bacteria and fungi in a 24 to 36 hour brew process. What we call *brewing* encompasses a broad range of purpose.

I make plant extracts in 55 gallon plastic drums. The top which got cut out (with a jigsaw) serves as a floating cover to semi-anchor down the plant material. The "stirring" I do consists of plunging down that top once or twice a day, by pressing it downward by hand, just to mix up the layers and keep any mold from forming. But if it does . . . no worries! I cover the works with a scrap of plywood to lessen evaporation and keep insect interest at bay.

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Zone 4b in New Hampshire

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[Karen Brindle](#)

[Re: Mould growing in my fermented plant extracts](#)

May 30, 2017 09:43AM

Registered: 9 years ago

Posts: 103

Michael, thank you!!! Just did my neem/fish/EM/Seacrop spray, just past petal fall, SO wet this spring, I've had no dry period long enough to spray before now. Scab and anthracnose are major concerns this season. We've had a week of very warm/dry weather so finally could get it done. Going into another week of wet weather. The Fermented tea spray may have to wait another week for dry weather, again. I'm really glad I don't have to throw the brew into the compost bin and start over!!! I will get a better cover for my next tea brew. Surprisingly, It looks like we got decent pollination, even though there was so much rain during bloom, and maple flower bloom happened at the same time. I truly believe the holistic sprays are making a huge difference in the health of our young trees!

[Vista Ridge Orchard](#)

Zone 8a in Washington

235 Cider and heritage apple trees, 72 varieties,

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