Quick vs. Slow-release Fertilizers

Today on Gardening in a Minute: quick vs. slow-release fertilizers.

We’ve all heard the fable about the tortoise and the hare. Even with landscape fertilizers, there’s a fast and a slow way of doing things!

Quick-release fertilizers are the “fast” way, since they make the nutrients, primarily the nitrogen, immediately available to the plant. They’re often used for plants with high nutrient needs, like vegetables or annuals.

But plants can absorb only so many nutrients at a time. If you apply too much quick-release fertilizer, it can leach through the soil and end up in our water supply.

For this reason, it’s often better to choose the “slow” option. Slow- or controlled-release fertilizers make specific nutrients, usually nitrogen, available to the plants over time. And by using them, you’ll help both your plants and the environment!

For more information about fertilizers and many other gardening topics, contact your county extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida’s Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.