

# Ron's Organics, Inc.

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## Beneficial Nematodes

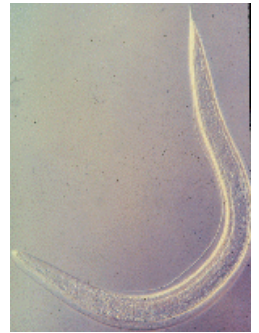
### Underground Pest Hunters

#### Beneficial Nematodes - Organic Insect Control

Beneficial nematodes are underground pest hunters that control over 250 different species of insects that spend some part of their lives underground. They are a very efficient organic insect control method and kill most insects before they become adults. This includes lots of common lawn and garden pests such as grubs, fleas, mole crickets, japanese beetles and weevils.

#### Beneficial Nematodes - Just what are they?

The beneficial nematode is a small microscopic worm that lives below the soil. The picture seen here is of a juvenile nematode called a scarp. It is generally clear or white in color and has no segments like earthworms do. There are over 20,000 different kinds of nematodes that live in the soil and a small handful of dirt will generally contain thousands of them. Nematodes are considered parasites and can affect a number of different plants and animals. Some species of nematodes are considered pests, but these are not the same species of beneficial nematodes used to control insects.



We recommend that a combination of beneficial nematodes be applied for organic insect control (*Steinernema* and *Heterorhabditis*), these are actually two different strains of beneficial nematodes which are parasites to other insects and spend their lives hunting and killing them. These nematodes will not control or kill other types of nematodes already in the soil.

#### How effective are nematodes as natural predators?

When a beneficial nematode attacks an insect larvae or grub it enters the body of its host. Generally within 48 hours that host insect will either die, be physically altered or unable to produce. The *Steinernema* and *Heterorhabditis* strains of nematode carry a bacteria that generally kills its host insect in quick fashion. The beneficial nematode then moves onto another host.

#### What sort of conditions does it require?

Beneficial nematodes live in almost any soil, but they prefer moist soil.

#### How do I care for and apply beneficial nematodes?

Beneficial nematodes are sold in packets which can be stored refrigerated for several weeks. When you are ready to apply them, you simply mix them with water and spread them on the soil. We recommend using a 5 gallon bucket or watering can for application. Greenhouses and indoor plant owners can also apply beneficial nematodes to indoor plants, the beneficial nematode will control gnats and fungus which inhabits the plant soil.