

Top 5 Composting Methods

Spring 2023



Keeping organic material out of the trash will put valuable nutrients back into the soil, help you grow healthier plants, reduce greenhouse gases and increase the lifespan of the landfill!

Did you know?
1/3 of all garbage sent to the landfill is organic waste!

FOOD WASTE EFFECTS

ROMY FOODS

1/3 OF THE FOOD PRODUCED GLOBALLY EACH YEAR IS NEVER EATEN

THESE GREENHOUSE GASES BECOME PART OF THE ATMOSPHERE AND TRAP IN HEAT, WHICH RAISES THE PLANET'S TEMPERATURE

THE WASTED FOOD ENDS UP IN LANDFILLS, WHERE (UNABLE TO DECOMPOSE) IT RELEASES GREENHOUSE GASES

ENERGY MONEY WATER LABOUR

THAT WENT INTO PRODUCING THIS FOOD WERE ALSO **WASTED**



HOUSEHOLD FOOD WASTE IN CANADA

63% of the food Canadians throw away or compost could have been eaten. For the average Canadian household, that costs \$1,100 per year.

WHAT IS BEING WASTED IN 2020?

The most commonly wasted foods are:

- VEGETABLES
- FRUITS
- LEFTOVERS



Method 1: Curbside Organics Collection

Getting your organic waste collected at the curb is the easiest way to get rid of food scraps and yard waste. All food scraps can be mixed directly with your yard waste. Curbside organic material includes veggie and fruit peelings, meat and bones, cooked foods, soiled paper and cardboard like pizza boxes and along with all yard waste. If your community does not have curbside collection, keep reading!



Before you start composting, try to reduce the amount of food waste you have by freezing or using up fruits, veggies and leftovers before they wilt, expire or go bad. For more tips, visit lovefoodhatewaste.ca

For more information, visit: www.cswm.ca

GREAT HEALTHY PLANTS BEGIN WITH GREAT HEALTHY SOIL.

Balance: Typically 1 part of **BROWN** to 1 to 2 parts of **GREEN** will give you the desired overall content of 30 **CARBON** to 1 **NITROGEN** (30:1) in your compost or compost pile.

BROWNS: Carbon

- dried leaves
- weeds: annual, without seeds
- corn stalks, straw, hay
- dried grass clippings
- cardboard or shredded newspaper (avoid glossy or heavily inked paper)
- wood chips, sticks, sawdust or wood ash in small amounts (untreated wood only)

GREENS: Nitrogen

- fruit and vegetable scraps
- rinsed egg shells
- grass clippings (not treated with herbicides)
- coffee grounds, tea bags and filters
- manure from vegetarian animals
- okara (tofu by-product)

DO NOT ADD: BBQ ashes/ coals, cooked food, invasive weeds like buttercup and morning glory or weeds with seed heads, dairy, dog or cat feces, fats, grease and oils, fish, meat and bones and cat litter.

Composting is an effective way to keep organic matter out of the landfill. It's a method of waste reduction that also creates a useful item - garden compost.

Method 2: Hot Composting

Typical backyard composters are enclosed containers that use aerobic digestion (which means the organisms helping with decomposition need oxygen). You don't need a lot of space, just a small area that gets sunlight to help increase the temperature to speed up the composting process. You will also need to mix the compost, making tumbler composters a great option if you don't like using a shovel. Pro tip: add a scoop of soil on top!



Method 3: Cold Composting

This method is great for residents that have lots of garden waste. Like hot composting, just add layers of nitrogen and carbon sources in one section, until it's full. Then mix it if you can and let it sit while you start filling a new section with organic material. Make sure to cover it if it's too rainy. Turning it more often will speed up the process.



Method 4: Direct Burying

The easiest compost method is trench composting or direct burying your food scraps. All you need is a shovel and some space to dig. Dig a small pit or deep trench 1 foot deep, fill it with your organic material and cover it as you go. The microorganisms in the soil will decompose the food waste fairly quickly and by the next spring you will have nutrient rich soil ready to plant into.



Method 5: Vermicomposting

Let the worms do the work for you! Buy a worm farm kit or make your own with online DIY guides. In any small, shallow, dark bin with ventilation, worms can live in cool, moist bedding material (dried leaves or shredded paper). Add fruit and veggie scraps (not citrus) and they will turn it into worm castings (a sanitized term for poop) within two to three months.



Lindsay Eason is the Community Educator for Comox Strathcona Waste Management. Book a workshop or presentation about waste reduction or zero waste
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Resources

Earth Warriors Composting
www.earthwarriorscomposting.com
Speedibin rat proof composter
<https://speedibin.com>
Worm orders & workshops
raincoastfarm@gmail.com Merville
www.BurnabyRedWigglers.com
Love Food Hate Waste
lovefoodhatewaste.ca