

# COMPOSTING

Here is a list of compost acceptable and non acceptable products. It is important to know exactly what you can and can not compost, so that your compost pile remains healthy and ready for use in the garden!

## WHAT IS COMPOSTABLE?

ACCEPTABLE FOOD	ACCEPTABLE OTHER	NON ACCEPTABLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apples</li> <li>- Artichoke Leaves</li> <li>- Asparagus Bottoms</li> <li>- Banana Peels</li> <li>- Beet Tops</li> <li>- Assorted Berries</li> <li>- Bread and Grain</li> <li>- Broccoli Stalks</li> <li>- Buckwheat Hulls</li> <li>- Cabbage Stalks</li> <li>- Carrot Tops</li> <li>- Celery Tops</li> <li>- Citrus Rinds</li> <li>- Egg Shells</li> <li>- Tea Leaves &amp; Bags</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Algae (Pond Weeds)</li> <li>- Apple Pomace</li> <li>- Bird Cage Cleanings</li> <li>- Bone &amp; Blood Meal</li> <li>- Cotton Rags</li> <li>- Garden Wastes</li> <li>- Granite Dust</li> <li>- Leather Waste</li> <li>- Leaf Mould</li> <li>- Composted Manure</li> <li>- Peanut Hulls</li> <li>- Peat Moss</li> <li>- Pine Needles</li> <li>- Rope</li> <li>- Wood Ash</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Butter</li> <li>- Bones</li> <li>- Cheese</li> <li>- Chicken</li> <li>- Fish Scraps</li> <li>- Lard</li> <li>- Mayonnaise</li> <li>- Meat Scraps</li> <li>- Milk</li> <li>- Peanut Butter</li> <li>- Salad Dressing</li> <li>- Sour Cream</li> <li>- Vegetable Oil</li> <li>- Yogurt</li> <li>- Diseased Plants</li> </ul>

## BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING

### Conservation of Landfill Space

It costs \$2,000,000 to open, operate and close a hectare of landfill space. Finding new landfill is becoming extremely difficult and existing ones are filling up fast. Composting not only saves money today but also reduces the costs we pay to maintain landfills after they are closed.

### Money Saved on Collecting Garbage

Many municipalities must transport their waste to distant disposal facilities. This is costly so many areas have implemented a user pay system, where you must pay for the amount of garbage you produce. By composting, an individual can save money by reducing the number of bags purchased.

### Composting provides an Excellent Soil Conditioner

Produced free of charge, compost serves as an environmentally sound alternative to commercial fertilizers.

### People Involved in Helping the Earth

Individuals can actively participate in making positive changes to their lifestyle and environment.

This section provides a look at a specialized form of composting called **vermicomposting**, which is relatively unknown to residents. In addition, a table on troubleshooting tips is provided for your needs!

## VERMICOMPOSTING

Vermicomposting is a unique and viable alternative for situations where normal composting techniques cannot be practiced. A special kind of earthworm is used to break down the organic materials. These animals are called red wigglers and are capable of eating their weight in organic matter each day. Along with the waste, the worms consume their bedding, then excrete castings.

These castings are an excellent natural plant food, that can be richer in certain materials than topsoil. Because composting using worms require less space than normal methods, it is ideal for offices, classrooms, and high density urban areas.

While an outdoor compost pile is still active during the winter, the decomposition is relatively slow. Most people are not generating yard waste after the snow falls. The only organic waste would be food and kitchen scraps. Vermicomposting allows a person to conveniently get rid of organic material without having to venture outside.

## TROUBLESHOOTING CHART

SYMPTOMS	PROBLEM	SOLUTION
The compost smells of ammonia.	Too much nitrogen in the pile.	Add brown leaves and mix them into the pile.
The compost smells like rotten eggs.	Not enough circulating air (anaerobic).	Aerate the pile. Turn for several days until dry.
The center of the pile is dry.	Not enough water.	Moisten materials while turning the pile.
The compost is damp and warm in the middle but nowhere else.	The pile is too small.	Collect material and mix old ingredients into a new pile.
The compost heap is attracting animals and other pests.	Scraps not properly covered by soil.	Fasten lid tightly. Do not add meat or fat and bury food wastes under soil.

