

# Composting - Why Do It?



Composting decomposes organic materials, such as food scraps and lawn and garden debris (e.g., grass cuttings, leaves, weeds, pine needles, wood chips) with microorganisms (e.g., bacteria and fungi) and transforms them into a dark, humus-like substance. Compost is an ideal soil amendment for growing better quality fruits and vegetables, flowers, shrubs, and trees without the need for harmful chemicals.



**Prevent Greenhouse Gasses.** According to recent EPA reports 35% - 40% of the materials we send to the landfill are recyclable organic materials - food waste, yard waste, and non-recyclable paper waste. If sent to a landfill, these materials produce ozone-damaging methane, a greenhouse gas that is 21-25 times more potent than carbon dioxide.



**Improve Water Quality.** Compost is a rich source of nutrients which significantly reduces or eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers. Because chemical fertilizer runoff tends to end up in our rivers and streams, using less will dramatically improve the quality of our water for all to use and enjoy.



**Improve Soil Quality.** Adding compost to our gardens and lawns improves soil structure, topsoil stability, soil aeration, water retention, root penetration, temperature stabilization, helps control erosion and weed growth, and acts as a protective barrier against toxins in the soil.



**Reduce The Use of Harmful Chemicals.** When we use compost on our gardens and lawns it minimizes the need for chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides, which are destructive to our soil, our water, our air, our long-term health, and our environment.



**Reduce Landfill Growth.** Landfills pollute groundwater, waste precious resources, require lots of energy to transport and manage materials, and discourage recycling, reuse, and composting. No matter where you live, you can help reduce landfill growth by composting at home or diverting your food and yard waste to **The Compost Exchange** at one of our convenient “drop off centers” or by using our curbside services.



**Local Benefits.** Job creation, food security, education, improved nutrition, better environment – these are all the net result of that simple act of placing your food waste into a composting bucket instead of the trash can.



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<http://thecompostexchange.com>