

BACKYARD COMPOSTING



WHAT IS COMPOST?

Composting is nature's way of recycling. Composting is a natural process of decomposition of organic material into a rich soil amendment.

WHY SHOULD I COMPOST?

The disposal of solid waste is becoming an increasingly difficult problem. Approximately 25% of your household waste is yard trimmings and kitchen scraps. To help reduce the stress on existing landfills and incinerators, New Hampshire passed a law in 1993 which prohibits the land filling or incineration of leaf and yard waste materials. As homeowners, we can play a major role in recycling organic wastes through composting. Best of all, the finished compost can improve your garden soil and the plants growing in it.

WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

Use the following lists as a guide to composting. To produce the best quality compost, material thicker than one-quarter inch should be shredded or chopped.



- leaves
- lawn clippings
- pine needles
- weeds
- straw
- hay
- sawdust
- wood ashes
- shredded newspaper
- animal manures
- coffee grounds
- fruits/vegetables
- crushed eggshells



- meats
- bones
- fatty foods
- oils
- dairy products
- colored newspaper
- coal ashes
- dog/cat wastes
- pressure treated wood
- plywood
- anything not biodegradable

HOW CAN I USE COMPOST?

Compost can be applied to enrich the flower and vegetable garden, to top-dress the lawn and as mulch around trees and shrubs. Houseplants and planter boxes will benefit from combining compost with the potting soil. Before using, it's best to sift the compost through a one-half inch mesh hardware cloth. The remaining coarse material may then be put back into a new compost pile.

Heavy clay or light sandy soil will benefit most from the addition of compost. Apply a two-inch layer on the soil surface and thoroughly work it into the upper six to eight inches of soil.