



Support
Document

Vocabulary

Waste Characterization

Introduction to Composting

Vocabulary

Municipal Solid Waste: trash (or garbage) generated by people and industry.

Waste Characterization Study: a study performed in order to find out how much and what types of waste are thrown away.

Environmental Protection Agency: a federal agency dedicated to helping the environment. They set rules and regulations for how waste can and should be disposed.

Organic Compounds: includes items that are living, have once lived, or are made from living things.

Decompose: the process that an item goes through to break down into its smallest elements.

Biodegrade: the process that an item goes through to break down into its smallest elements, through the use of micro-organisms.

Compost: the result of decomposition of organic material. It is generally used for fertilizer or soil conditioning.

Compost Pile

Items that can go in a compost pile

Grass clippings and leaves
Newspapers
Paper towels
Fruits and vegetables
Woody material
Coffee grounds and tea bags

Items that can NOT go in a compost pile

Weeds
Meats
Dairy products
Food cooked with animal fats
Animal fat
Human and pet fecal matter

Compost Column Formula

Formula to use in compost column

2 1/2 cups bagged salad (greens)
1/2 cup dried leaves (browns)
1/2 cup pencil shavings (browns)
1 cup shredded paper (browns)
1 cup water
1 cup soil

1 tablespoon compost starter (microorganisms)