

# Backyard Composting

DIY Success!



## What is Composting?

- Composting is a natural process whereby organic household and yard wastes are broken down into a rich, soil-like product called *compost* or *humus* – which can then be returned to the soil in a useable form.
- Did you know that by composting kitchen scraps and yard debris, you can reduce your waste output by 20 percent or more? Backyard composting is simple to do and in return you get a high quality soil conditioner for your garden. Fewer trips to the landfill and a happier, healthier garden – you can't lose!

## Why Compost?

- You will have a product that will enrich your soil with essential nutrients for optimum plant growth in gardens and landscape areas.
- You are reducing the amount of garbage that goes to landfill which ultimately helps prolong its lifespan.
- Less garbage means lower costs to the municipality in disposal costs.



- About 1 / 3 of household garbage can be composted.
- Fruit and vegetable peelings and cores.
- Spoiled fruit and vegetables.
- Coffee grinds and filters, and tea bags.
- Egg shells and paper egg cartons.
- Leaves, grass clippings (in small quantities) and garden plants.

## What Can I Compost?



## Composting in Bear Country!

- Unlike digester units, which are enclosed systems that break down organic waste without air, compost bins require aeration to function properly. Bears find food with their noses, so precautions must be taken when composting in bear country.
  - The key to not attracting bears to your backyard compost bin is to eliminate the odours that attract them.
  - Do not add cooked or left-over food scraps to your bin.
  - Never compost meat, fish, fats, oil, grease, bones, or dairy products.
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- **Sprinkle your compost with lime to aid in decomposition and reduce odour.**
  - **It is key that each time you add kitchen waste, cover it with brown materials (dry leaves, sawdust, newspaper or dried grass clippings) or soil.**
  - Keep compost aerated and properly turned. Add branches, if necessary, to get air underneath the pile.
  - Locate the compost bin in an open area, well away from the forest edge, thickets and natural pathways used by bears.
  - Better yet, try vermicomposting – an indoor compost system that uses worms to digest the organic material. No more tromping through the snow!