

# Waste as a Resource



## Composting is Recycling Too!

Nova Scotians are diverting over 100,000 tonnes of organic waste every year through backyard composting and curbside collection in green carts. That makes enough compost to fill 50,000 pick-up trucks!

Since 1998, food and yard waste has been banned from disposal in landfills and incinerators. You can no longer put organic waste in the regular garbage.

### What is Composting?

Composting is nature's way of recycling organic matter and nutrients back into the soil for use by new and growing plants. Food scraps, yard waste and other organic materials are broken down with the help of micro-organisms and turned into compost, a rich soil amendment. Micro-organisms create temperatures up to 68° C during the process, which ensures that pathogens are destroyed.

**30-50% of household waste can be recycled through composting programs.**

Backyard composting is a great way to keep compost handy for your own personal use.

Where curbside collection programs are available, residents can divert even more items from disposal, such as meat, fat, fish, bones, weeds, and diseased plants. The contents of the green carts are processed at centralized composting facilities.



## Environmental and Economic Benefits of Composting

- *Extends the life of landfills*
- *Decreases greenhouse gas emissions*
- *Protects groundwater and streams*
- *Creates jobs in the collection, transport, and processing of organic waste into compost*
- *Turns waste into a resource*

When food and yard waste are buried in landfills, they decompose without air. A by-product of this process is a gas called methane that contributes to global warming. It also results in leachate, a liquid that can contaminate streams and groundwater if not properly managed.

## Benefits of Using Compost

Quality compost can be used in vegetable and flower gardens, on lawns, trees, shrubs, and even houseplants!

Improve your lawn by spreading compost evenly on top of the grass surface, or work compost into the soil on new lawns, vegetable gardens, and around trees, shrubs, and houseplants. Your efforts will be rewarded with stronger blooms, leaves and stems; improved root growth and seed production; increased disease resistance, and healthier soil.



*Contact your local municipality for information about organic diversion programs in your area.*



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