

SPECIALITIES

Disease Prevention

One inch of compost mulch is the best plant disease prevention known to exist. No chemical fungicide can conquer disease better.

Continuous Fertilizer

Locate pile near a favorite tree or scrub. The compost will slowly feed the roots.

Compost Poultice

Dampen compost slightly and lay it on a tree wound. Wrap the compost with a biodegradable material. Remove the wrap when a callus has formed. The microbial content of compost has disease-fighting capabilities.

AS A MULCH

Mulch reduces soil compaction and erosion while maintaining soil moisture and temperature. This also reduces weed germination and growth.

Trees

10-20cm starting 30cm from trunk to drip line (The imaginary circle that you would draw on the soil around a tree directly under the outermost branch tips where the rain drips).

Grass

Top dress your lawns with 5-15cm of finished compost in spring or fall.

Shrubs

7.5cm starting 5cm from stem to drip line.

Plants

Side dressing (edge bed with 15cm layer compost) or in the rows. Leave 2.5cm of space between the compost and the base of plant stems to avoid burning the plants.

COMPOST TEA

Regular

Fill an old pillowcase or burlap bag with compost and sink it into a large bucket or barrel of water. The longer you steep, the stronger it will be.

The final 'brew' can be used as a light liquid feed, diluted to 10 parts water to 1 part tea. Diluted concentrate can be sprayed directly on leaves to increase nutrient absorption.

Fermented

Stir 1 part aged compost into 5 parts water. Ferment 10 to 14 days.

Strain and spray thoroughly on diseased leaves to control botrytis molds, downy or powdery mildew and late blight.

Fermented Tea makes plants more disease resistant. Repeat every two weeks.



REAPS
RECYCLING & ENVIRONMENTAL
ACTION PLANNING SOCIETY

Location: Growing Knowledge Community Compost Garden Campus Ring Road (UNBC) Prince George

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Harvesting & Using

YOUR COMPOST



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HARVESTING

1. Assemble a ½” wire screen over a wheelbarrow, preferably with a tarp underneath.
2. Slowly shovel the compost onto the screen, sifting through the finished compost, removing sticks, rocks, etc.
3. When the wheelbarrow is full, remove your screen and unfinished compost, and empty your compost into your storage area. Place unfinished compost into a nearby bucket or tarp for now.
4. Continue until you have emptied your compost bin. Return the unfinished compost to the bin for the next round of composting!

Caution: Be aware of “Organic Dust Toxic Syndrome.” If you are prone to allergies, wear a mask when handling. Compost and mulch contain tiny plant materials and are filled with bacteria and fungi.

FINISHED COMPOST

The finished compost may be used as soon as the temperature of the pile has lowered and stabilized. Finished compost has a pleasant earthy smell, few recognizable pieces of the original organic materials, and has a dark brown or black color.

You can test if the compost is ready by putting some in an airtight plastic bag for a couple of days. If when you open the bag the compost smells like sweet dirt and is relatively unchanged, it is safe to use on your plants. If it smells rotten or like ammonia, it still has active decomposers in it and needs to be cured longer. Return the compost to the pile and test again in a week. In the meantime, cure your compost!

CURING

- If your compost is too hot, then make sure to cure your compost, essentially leaving it alone to stabilize.
- **Cure** compost for 1 to 6 months in a protected spot with a cover. Nutrients will stabilize and be ready for plant use.
- Though weed seeds should not be composted (as they will not break down in a backyard composter), sometimes they find their way into your bin. Storing the compost also has the advantage of finding them – when you see the seedlings, remove them.

AS A FERTILIZER

Compost has a Nitrogen-Phosphorus-potassium (NPK) value of 1-1-1. Even with its low NPK, compost releases nutrients slowly throughout the growing season. Compost also adds air spaces to soil, and improves soil drainage.

SOIL MAINTENANCE

Digging In

- **Fall:** Add unfinished compost to decompose over winter.
- **Spring:** Add aged compost at least two weeks before planting.
- **Vegetable Seeds:** Are vulnerable to decomposers; if you don’t wait for 2 weeks before planting, wait until the seedlings are established before adding compost as a side-dressing.

Improve Your Soil

- **Clay or Sandy:** Dig 5-8cm of compost in 15cm of topsoil annually.
- **Loam:** Dig 2.5cm of compost in 15cm of topsoil annually.
- **Annually:** Add a 1.25cm layer of compost annually to help maintain soil fertility.
- **In New Gardens:** mix a 2.5cm layer of compost 7.5-10cm deep into your soil.
- **Lawn Care:** top dress lawn, use rake to spread out.

Add it to
YOUR PLANTS!

