

## Composting 101

### What Is Composting?

- Composting can be summarized as managed aerobic (oxygen requiring) decomposition or accelerated decomposition of organic matter.
- Composting
- Decomposition is the process of organic materials being broken down into matter and returned to the environment. (Nature's way of recycling.)

### Why Should I Compost?

- Assist the environment by reducing landfill waste
- Reduce carbon footprint
- Compost enriches soil
- Educational and fun

### How Do I Compost?

- The basics: To compost you must create a habitat for decomposing organisms. This habitat is most commonly created in a composting bin. To develop a healthy environment for decomposing organisms brown (carbon dry) and green (nitrogen wet) organic material is layered within the bin. These organic materials serve as feedstock. Water and air must also be available in the right amount to create a healthy environment for composting. After the decomposing organisms have completed their job, the compost can be harvested and utilized to enrich soil.
- Hot Composting- creates fine compost or humus in 6-8 weeks, but requires more effort. The pile must be regularly turned and 'brown' and 'green' materials must be kept in balance.
- Cold Composting- creates coarse compost, but requires little effort and takes time.
- Composting Bin Systems:
  - Static: require the layering of green and brown organic material in a pile that will grow over time. This system does not require piles to be turned and come in a variety of structures.
  - Tumbler: are a closed unit that enables compost to be regularly turned.
  - Turning: is a three sectioned unit that enable compost to be shifted between the different sections. There is usually one section each for new material, partially decomposed material, and for curing compost.

#### Reference

"Choose Your Bin." Cornell Cooperative Extension Thompsons County.

*Composting*. 2020, warren.cce.cornell.edu/gardening-landscape/warren-county-master-gardener-articles/composting.

"Quick-Start Guide to Compost." Cornell Cooperative Extension Thompsons County.

