



Northumberland  
county

## Northumberland County's Guide to Composting



Backyard composting will reduce how much waste you send to landfill, and will create a finished compost you can use in your gardens.

Once you have a composter you can begin. Just follow these simple steps:

Step 1:

- Choose a sunny area with good drainage for your composter. Make sure the location is accessible year round.

Step 2:

- Turn the soil in the location where the compost is to be placed.

Step 3:

- Place kitchen scraps (greens) and dried excess yard material (browns) in alternating six-inch layers.

Step 4:

- Place a layer of finished compost or garden soil on top of the compost pile. This will introduce microorganisms needed for decomposition and help to reduce odour.

Step 5:

- Remember to turn the pile frequently to aerate your compost.
- Add small amounts of water to keep pile moist.

## **What can you compost?**

- Vegetable and fruit peelings.
- Dry leaves & grass clippings.
- Coffee grounds & filters; tea bags/leaves.
- Wood ashes.
- Weeds, before they seed.
- Spent plants and flowers.
- Straw, hay, corn cobs.
- Crushed egg shells.
- Bread, pasta, rice (no oil or sauce).
- Woodchips and sawdust.
- Hair and dryer lint.

## **What not to compost**

- Grass/tree clippings treated with chemicals.
- Rhubarb leaves and other toxic plants.
- Plants infected with disease.
- Walnut shells, walnut leaves.
- Charcoal/coal ashes.
- Dog or cat droppings.
- Litter box material.
- Meat and bones.
- Plastics and metals.
- Dairy products.
- Fats and oils.

### **Will it smell?**

Compost has a pleasant aroma. Foul odours only occur when there is a lack of oxygen, too much wet green material, or too little brown material. Turning the pile with a shovel can minimize odours.

### **Will it attract animals?**

Materials such as meat, bones, eggs, cheese, fats and oils are not recommended for backyard composting because they attract animals.

To reduce the risk:

- Use a composter with a cover; secure with hinges or weigh down the lid.
- You can also utilize a base made of wire mesh to prevent animals from digging under the pile, while still allowing water to drain.
- When adding food waste, dig it in immediately and cover with soil.

### **Where can I purchase a backyard composter?**

Backyard composters are available for purchase starting at \$40 at:

- Northumberland County Headquarters, 555 Courthouse Rd., Cobourg Ontario.
- Material Recovery Facility, 280 Edwardson Rd., Grafton Ontario.

For more information on our programs and services, please contact us

**1-866-293-8379**

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