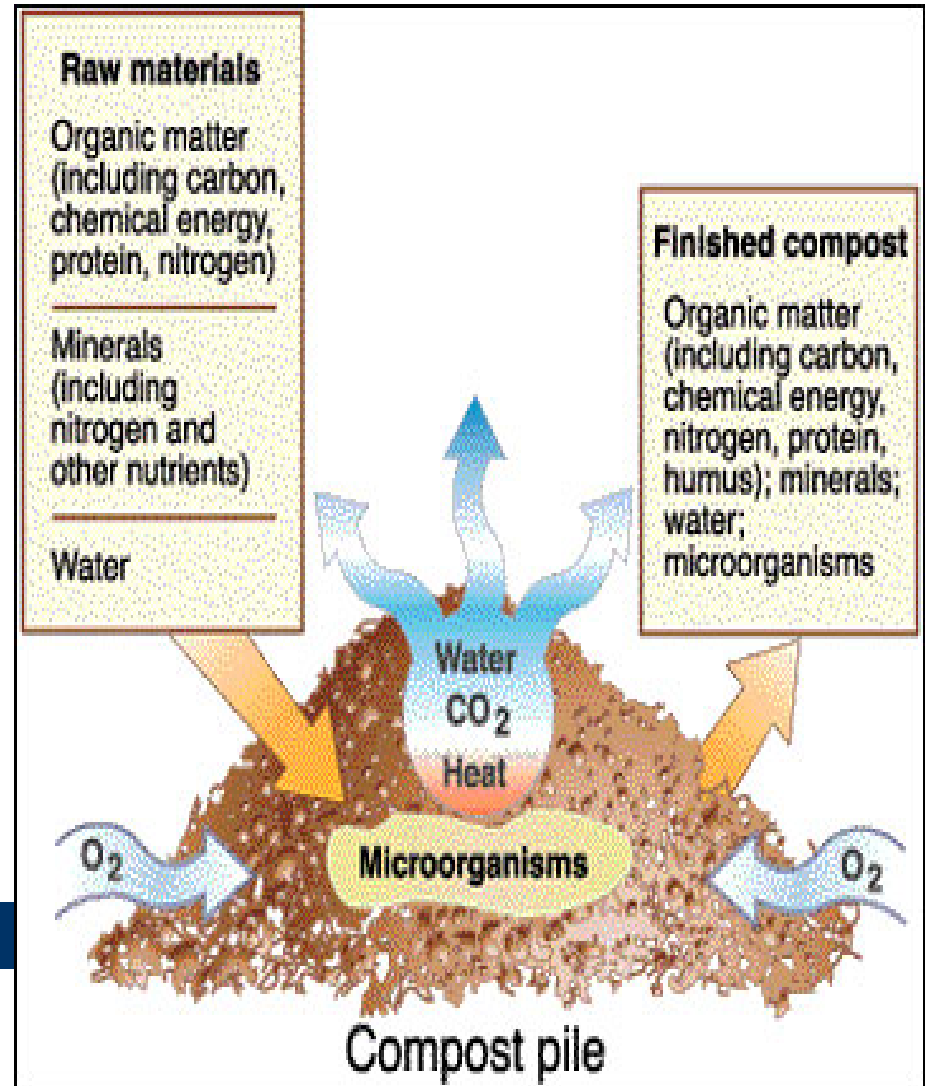


How to Win at Composting

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Picture from MU Extension Service web page

How to Win at Composting

- Educate Yourself and Practice Compost at Home
- Choose Team Members
- Develop the Game Plan
- Know the Rules
- Show Me the Money
- Collection Strategies
- Track your Stats
- Cheering Section

Educate yourself and practice compost at home

- The best advice I could give anyone is to make sure you have practical experience. Do try this at home!
- <http://www.musc.edu/recycle/vermicompost.htm>
- <http://www.mastercomposter.com/>
- <http://www.compostingcouncil.org/index.cfm>
- <http://cityfarmer.org/wormcomp61.html>
- <http://www.vermico.com/>
- <http://www.vermitechsystems.com/home.html>
- http://www.fac.unc.edu/WasteReduction/Recyclables/animal_bedding.asp

Educate yourself and practice compost at home

- http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmppd/Services/Recycling_and_Solid_Waste/?Page=Composting/Composting.html
- <http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~envintrn/report99/ruepr99.html>
- <http://www.ithaca.edu/remp/composting.htm>
- <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~recycle/Composting.htm>
- http://compost.css.cornell.edu/Composting_homepage.html
- <http://www.epa.gov/msw/compost.htm>
- <http://www.earth911.org/master.asp?s=lib&a=organics/organics.asp>
- <http://www.composters.com/main.shtml>

Know the Rules

- Check with your Safety Department to determine if there are any regulations that govern composting in your State
 - Municipal Solid Waste by State
<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/non-hw/muncpl/states.htm>
 - Raymond Communications Recycling Laws Update
<http://www.raymond.com/>
 - US EPA Laws and Regulations
<http://www.epa.gov/epahome/lawreg.htm>

Know the Rules

- Create Guidelines for working with the compost for your employees
 - Working with the Worms
<http://www.musc.edu/recycle/vermicompost.htm>

Choose Team Members

- Top-level commitment and leadership are critical to adopt and implement a composting program
- Crucial team members include maintenance, grounds, and cafeteria staff
- You may want to include housekeeping and research staff
- Other possible team members include infection control and nursing staff

Develop the Game Plan

- Use established performance improvement or quality methodologies. Here's one example:
- FOCUS-PDCA
 - F Find a process
 - O Organize a team
 - C Clarify existing knowledge
 - U Understand process variation
 - S Select the improvement
 - P Plan the improvement
 - D Do the improvement
 - C Check
 - A Act
- <http://www.musc.edu/qn/QualityNetwork.html>

Develop the Game Plan

- Determine what and how much you have to compost
 - Yardwaste
 - Food waste (pre and post consumer)
 - Animal Lab Waste (non-hazardous, herbivorous)
 - Paper Products (cardboard, newspaper, hand towels)
- Investigate on-site and off-site composting choices
 - For example our bulky yardwaste is composted by a local municipality. We use 4 active piles on-site to compost some of our leaf and grass material. Finally, we use worms to compost some of our food waste.

Develop the Game Plan

- Collection and Transportation
 - Off-Site
 - Chances are you already have a method of collection and transportation for yardwaste and food waste just make sure it is going to a composting facility
 - On-Site Yardwaste
 - Some composting methods require you to pay attention to the mix of carbon(leaves) and nitrogen(grass) yardwaste materials
 - Make sure to evaluate collection and transportation options together
 - Options for collecting yardwaste include everything from trucks and carts to plastic or paper bags

Develop the Game Plan

- Collection and Transportation
 - On-Site Food Waste
 - Collection and transportation will depend on the method of composting you choose and on how your kitchen and lunchroom are set up
 - Food waste is heavy and wet so choose a small to medium size(human labor) or large size(mechanized) bin that is sturdy with a lid and wheels
 - Label and/or color code the bins
 - Choose bins that clean up easily/avoid using plastic bags(increases labor expense when emptying and creates waste)
 - Place compost bins near food prep stations
 - Place trash bins next to compost bins

Track Your Stats

- Off-Site Composting
 - Ask your dumpster company to include tonnage information on your invoices for each dumpster emptied
- On-Site Composting
 - Weight your food waste and if applicable the material you use as bedding
 - Track the volume of the yardwaste you compost
 - It is not easy to just look at a compost pile to determine volume because in some cases your pile will settle very fast and often so as you add material you really have more in the bin than you think
 - Determine the size of your trash carts or bags and keep track of how many of each you put into your compost pile
 - Track your cost savings

Show Me the Money

- On-Site Composting Example:
 - 4 bin system 12' X 8' X 4' cost \$1,500 labor and \$500 materials
 - Worm composting system 200 pounds a day start-up cost \$53,000 includes worms, compost machine, shredder, conveyor, shed type building
 - Chipper for mulch \$4,700
- Off-Site Composting Example:
 - 20 yard dumpster(s) you pay rental fee, haul cost, and tip fee. Cost vary widely by region
- Go to the following web page for more information:
<http://www.musc.edu/gogreen>

Show Me the Money

- It has proven cost effective for MUSC to compost
 - Our compost corrals are closer to the heart of campus than the dumpsters so we save labor
 - When we use the corrals for yardwaste or the worm composting method for food waste we save on dumpster expenses such as rental, hauling and tip fees
 - In our area the tip fee for compost is much less than the tip fee for trash
 - We have the finished products of mulch and compost to use in our spring planting beds instead of buying top soil or peat moss

Cheering Section

- Education is the key for top management and the employees doing the work
- Once you have results share them proudly
- Idea: Donate compost to an auction
- Idea: Hold an in-service during the lunch hour for employees to learn how to compost in their own back yards
- Idea: Take a picture of those stunning plants that were grown in beds that contain the compost and put the picture in your organizations newsletter