

Implementing a Composting Program

Three Components:

- Brown- dead leaves, branches, sticks, cardboard, bark, newspaper, straw
- Green- fruit and vegetable scraps, pine needles, coffee and tea grounds, garden waste, grass
- Water

What is NOT Compostable:

- Meats, bones, fish, fats, dairy
- Weeds that have seeded
- Pet droppings
- Chemicals
- Aluminum foil, plastic, metal

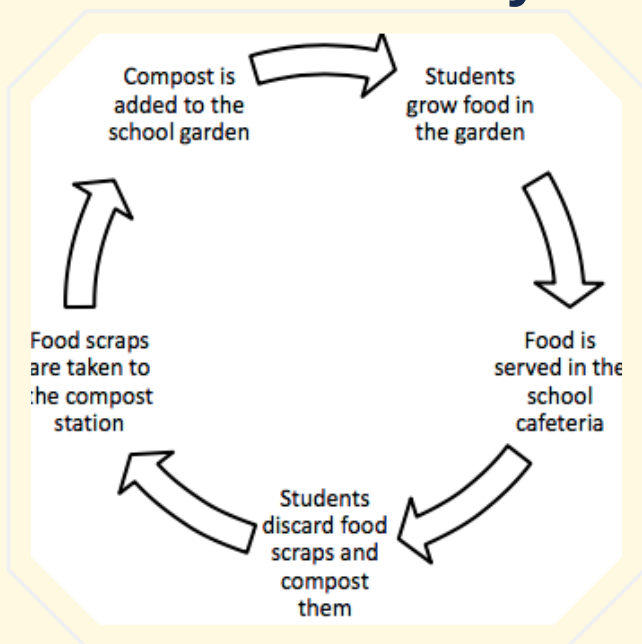
Requirements:

- 2 parts brown to 1 part green
- Partial or full sun location
- Turn and water once a week to once a month (more frequent = faster breakdown)
- Size at least 3x3x3 ft

Quick Facts:

- It takes 2-5 months to be ready to use
- Your pile should not smell, if it does, you do not have the right ratio of brown to green components

Sustainable Cycle



Source: greenmountainfarmtoschool.org

STEPS

- 1 Begin a school garden
- 2 Separate food scraps from food served in the cafeteria
- 3 Take compostable materials to the compost station
- 4 Use compost in school garden to grow more food!



BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING

- Creates awareness about sustainability & food waste
- Decreases waste that goes to landfills
- Saves money on waste removal
- Reduces carbon dioxide (CO₂) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) emissions that damage the ozone
- Compostable items decomposing in landfill produces methane gas
- Unburned methane gas traps heat which is detrimental to the environment
- Replaces synthetic chemical fertilizers, reducing dangerous gases produced during fertilizer production
- Helps soil retain carbon dioxide, reduces water runoff, and prevents erosion
- Creates nutrient rich soil with beneficial microorganisms and balances soil pH
- Fosters a sense of school pride while educating students on how to care for their environment

More resources to help you get started!

- 1. Composting Cycle in Schools:** greenmountainfarmtoschool.org
- 2. Composting Basics:** <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>
- 3. Environmental Benefits:**
http://makedirtnotwaste.org/sites/default/files/composting_factsheet_0.pdf
- 4. Composting in Schools Resources:** <https://www.lifelab.org/composting/>
- 5. Curriculum Guide K-12 (Cornell)** <http://compost.css.cornell.edu/schools.html>
- 6. Getting Started, Resources for Schools:** <https://compostingcouncil.org/composting-for-teachers-and-students/>

SUSTAINABILITY IN SCHOOL NUTRITION

ESC Region 11