

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

- Reduces soil compaction and erosion.
- Maintains soil moisture and temperature.
- 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).

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.



*R*ecycling and
*E*nvironmental
*A*ction
*P*lanning
*S*ociety

R.E.A.P.S.

Location: 1950 Gorse St.
Prince George, B.C.

Mailing Address: PO Box 444,
Prince George, B.C.
V2L 4S6

Website: www.reaps.org
Phone: 250-561-7327
Fax: 250-561-7324
Email: events@reaps.org



*R*ecycling and
*E*nvironmental
*A*ction
*P*lanning
*S*ociety

Harvesting & Using your Finished Compost



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 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.

NOTE: 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.

...then put it on your plants!!!

AS A FERTILIZER

Compost has a NPK (nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium) 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.

GENERAL SOIL MAINTENANCE:

1. 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

2. 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 0.5cm compost each season.

