



Grow-Your-Own at Home!

Week 3: Composting & Vermicomposting

LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson covers the basic elements of composting: how to properly make compost and why it is important for the health of our gardens and plants.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- Participants will identify one thing that can go in the compost pile.
- Participants will identify one thing that cannot go in the compost pile.
- Participants will identify the basic elements needed to make great compost.
- Participants will learn what vermicomposting is and identify basic worm care.

VOCABULARY

decomposition - the state or process of rotting; decay

organism - any individual animal, plant, or single-celled life form

compost - a mixture that consists largely of decayed organic matter and is used for fertilizing and conditioning soil and land

earthworms - burrowing annelid worms that live in soil; play an important role in aerating and draining the soil and in burying organic matter

earthworm casting - a cylindrical mass of earth voided by an earthworm (worm fecal matter)

vermi-composting - the use of earthworms to convert organic waste into fertilizer

decompose - to break down, rot, or decay

humus - a dark soil-like material made up of broken-down vegetable and animal matter

organic matter - something that comes from living organisms, such as plants and animals

inorganic - composed of matter that is not plant or animal; something that is not and has never been living

microorganism - tiny organism, such as bacteria, that breaks down organic matter and cannot be seen without magnification

mineral - an inorganic substance found in soil that is used by plants and needed for a healthy diet

nutrient - a material that provides nourishment (food) and gives organisms energy and helps them grow

soil compaction - occurs when soil particles are pressed together, reducing pore space between them

QUESTIONS

- Why is soil health so important?
- What can you put in your compost pile?
- What cannot go into your compost pile?
- What are the basic elements needed to make great compost?

CALL TO ACTION

Start composting some of your food scraps today: all you need is a jar and a garden!
Make your own home worm bin!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Composting service in Omaha-metro: www.hillside.solutions
- 3 Compartment Compost Bin plans: www.formeremortals.net

