



- Presentation will begin shortly
- Session will be recorded
- All attendees are muted
- Please be aware of Q&A at bottom of screen – ask your questions there
- We will address questions at various points in the session

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- **September 10:** Going Electric in Chula Vista
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SUMMER SUSTAINABILITY SERIES

Compost 101

August 27th, 2020



SUMMER SUSTAINABILITY SERIES



**All attendees are muted
Please type your questions in the question box**



SUMMER SUSTAINABILITY SERIES

Compost 101 & other best practices for your garden

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City of Chula Vista's

Backyard Composting Program

- ▶ Workshops
- ▶ Compost bins
(CV residents)
- ▶ Master Composter
Training



Living Coast Discovery Center

- ▶ A non-profit organization that inspires the community to connect with and care for our coastal environment
- ▶ Temporarily closed to public-virtual programs and private tours
- ▶ 1st and 3rd Sunday at 2pm-Backyard Composting Workshop through Zoom





What we will cover today:

- ▶ Benefits of compost/composting
- ▶ Composting methods
- ▶ Using compost in your gardens

Composting

- ▶ FBI (fungus, bacteria, invertebrates)
 - ▶ “Controlled” decomposition
 - ▶ Why: Improve soil / reduce trash
 - ▶ How:
 - ▶ Space
 - ▶ Materials
 - ▶ Effort
- ▶ Take food → put it in a pile → make soil.

Compost
Happens!



Benefits of using compost

Improve physical structure

- ▶ Benefits both clay and sandy soils
- ▶ Reduces runoff
- ▶ Improves water retention
- ▶ Improves aeration
- ▶ Provides excellent growing conditions for many varieties of plants
- ▶ Increased biodiversity

Improves Plant Health

- ▶ Nutrient release over time
- ▶ pH buffer
- ▶ Healthy plants are more resistant to pests and disease



Traditional Composting

- ▶ What is so hot?
 - ▶ Aerobic bacteria: 90° - 150° F
- ▶ Who should use this method?
 - ▶ Backyard space
 - ▶ Large amounts of organic material



Parameters

Traditional Composting

▶ Greens= Nitrogen

- ▶ Fruits, vegetables, grass clippings and other plant trimmings, manure, pasta, bread, tea bags, used coffee grounds

▶ Browns= Carbon

- ▶ Dried leaves, straw, twigs, sawdust, ground brush, wood chips, shredded paper, napkins, paper plates

▶ Air and Water

- ▶ Aerobic bacteria produce energy, grow quickly, and consume material
- ▶ Turn your pile and mix in browns
- ▶ Moisture test

▶ 50% Greens :50% Browns



How To Build and Maintain a Hot Pile

- ▶ Dampen browns and alternate 3 in. layers of greens and browns
- ▶ Mix layers slightly
- ▶ Keep it fluffy! Don't compress your layers
- ▶ Add a dry layer of brown on top to maintain moisture, reduce odors, and keep away flies
- ▶ Turn and mix compost with a pitchfork. Add new material towards the center of the pile.





City Requirements

- ▶ Odors
 - ▶ Neighbors
 - ▶ >6 feet from entrances
- ▶ <5 feet tall, <6 feet wide, <6 feet long

Compost “Tumblers”

- ▶ Enclosed unit with spinning ability
- ▶ \$\$ - High moisture - Lower temps
- ▶ Daily turning - can be heavy



- ▶ Small yard/food waste
- ▶ Similar to hot composting method



Vermicomposting

- ▶ “Cool” Composting method- No turning needed
- ▶ High nutrient compost
- ▶ Food waste and shredded paper only
- ▶ Apartments or those with limited space
- ▶ How do I do it?
 - ▶ Red Wrigglers
 - ▶ Storage bin
 - ▶ Cool, damp, and dark



Composting for the less motivated

- ▶ “Dig and drop”
- ▶ Households with small or large yards
- ▶ No browns, no turning
- ▶ Lift the lid, put food scraps in, close lid.



Composting for the less motivated

- ▶ 5-gallon bucket
- ▶ Drill holes
- ▶ Dig a hole
- ▶ Bury bucket
- ▶ Add vegetative food waste



When is Compost Done?

▶ Screening

- ▶ Material decomposition rate varies
- ▶ Return unfinished materials back into pile
- ▶ Cure your compost before applying

▶ Compost tea

- ▶ A little compost goes a long way
- ▶ Liquid fertilizer for plant roots
- ▶ Natural insect repellent



How to Make Compost Tea

- ▶ Place dechlorinated water in bucket
- ▶ Collect 2-3 cups of compost or worm castings and make a “tea bag”
- ▶ Submerge compost into water with air pump
- ▶ Stir occasionally and brew for 24-48 hours
- ▶ Dilute tea 1:1 and apply to plants within 24-48 hours of brewing



Compost application



- ▶ New garden or vegetable garden
 - ▶ ~20 - 30%
- ▶ Established gardens
 - ▶ Apply as a mulch

Compost or Mulch?



FREE Compost Event

Chula Vista Residents only! One load per household.



Saturday, August 29

8 am - 12 pm • Otay Landfill

Customer Convenience Area • 1700 Maxwell Road, Chula Vista

Load your own – while supplies last!

Bring buckets, containers, shovels, and tarps.

Living Coast Compost Programs

- ▶ Register for a Zoom Backyard Compost Workshop!
 - ▶ <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvfuuhrjgrGNPU6YPU nJam6kx2taaj8R0s>
- ▶ Check out the Living Coast's pre-recorded workshops series for more detailed explanations of composting!
 - ▶ <https://www.facebook.com/watch/106857986009/502403367307016>
 - ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLjPYUZVA9EBuGU WJFQ-ruFqS6qc5IZm0N>





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