

# Composting is easy!

To make compost, just follow these simple steps:

## 1. Add three parts "browns"...

Fall leaves, straw, salt marsh hay, shredded paper and cardboard (newspaper, paper towels, paper plates, paper bags), chipped brush, sawdust, pine needles (pine needles should not make up more than 10% of total material in pile).

## ...and one part "greens"

Grass clippings, weeds (not laden with seeds), vegetable and fruit wastes, seaweed, eggshells, coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, manure (horse, cow, rabbit, chicken, goat, gerbil, etc).

## 2. Mix or layer materials.

After every 12" or so, add a few shovelfuls of rich soil or compost.

## 3. Keep it damp and aerated.

Wait a few months, and voilà...black gold!

For best results, and to keep out odors and pests,

### DO NOT ADD:

- Meat, bones, fat, grease, oils
- Peanut butter
- Dairy products
- Cooked foods with sauces or butter
- Dog and cat manure
- Diseased plants
- Weeds gone to seed
- Weeds that spread by roots and runners (vines)

Prepared by the Massachusetts  
Department of Environmental  
Protection



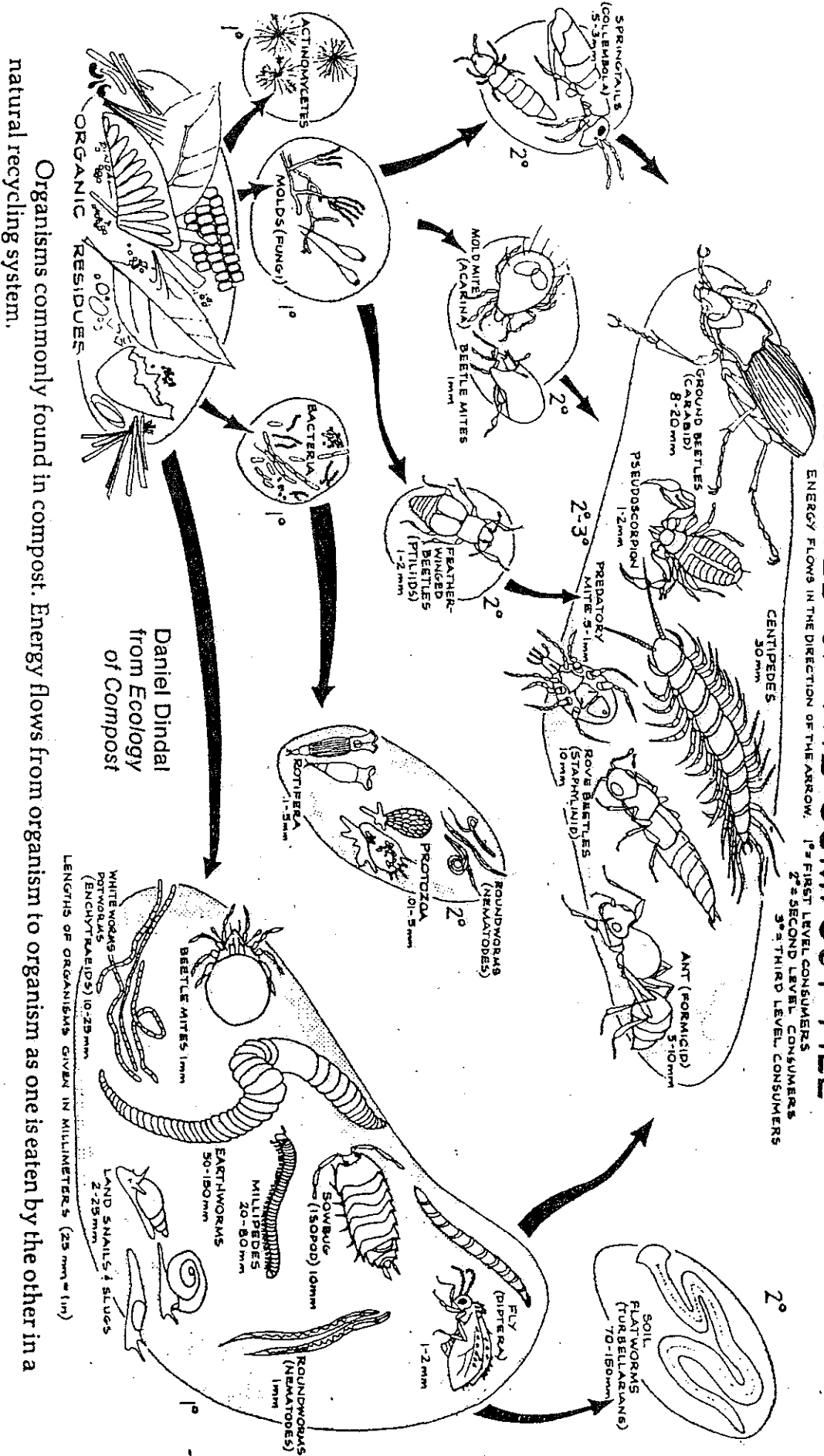
# FOOD WEB OF THE COMPOST PILE

ENERGY FLOWS IN THE DIRECTION OF THE ARROW.

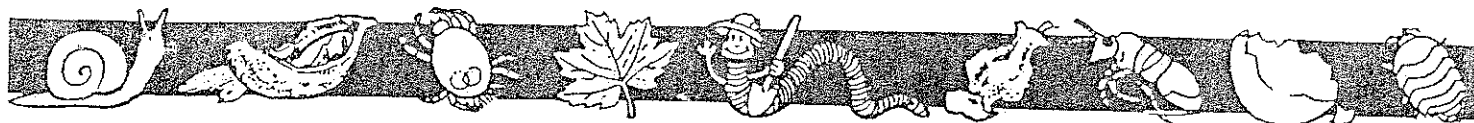
1° FIRST LEVEL CONSUMERS

2° SECOND LEVEL CONSUMERS

3° THIRD LEVEL CONSUMERS

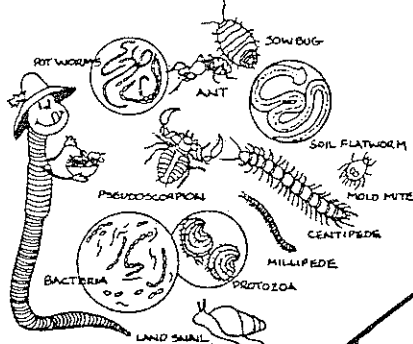


Organisms commonly found in compost. Energy flows from organism to organism as one is eaten by the other in a natural recycling system.



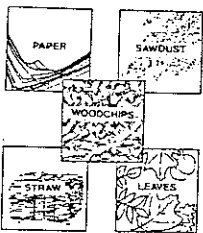
# How Does Composting Work?

**1.** We are the key to composting. We love to eat banana peels, rotten apples, brown wilted lettuce, fallen leaves, and weeds from your garden.



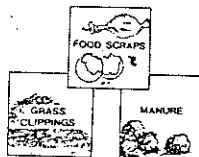
**2.** We need a balanced diet! We need carbon for energy and nitrogen to help build our bodies. Some of your wastes are high in carbon. These include

- paper
- straw
- sawdust
- leaves
- wood chips



Other wastes are high in nitrogen. These include

- food scraps
- grass clippings
- manure

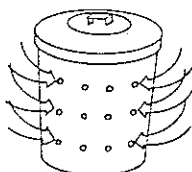


Be sure to include a mixture of wastes high in carbon and wastes high in nitrogen in your compost pile.



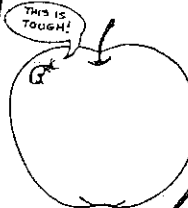
**3.** Don't smother us! We need air to survive. If we don't have air, the compost pile will turn smelly!

Be sure your compost container has holes in it to allow air to get into the compost pile. If possible, stir or turn your compost pile every week or so to let in more air.

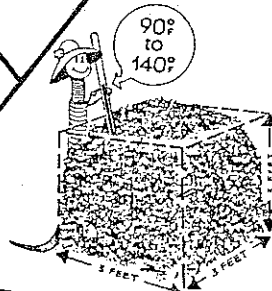


**7.** If you supply all these things—food, air, and moisture in a good-sized pile—we will be glad to make compost for you.

**6.** We must be able to get to our food! It is harder for us to eat large pieces of food than to eat small pieces of food.



90° to 140°



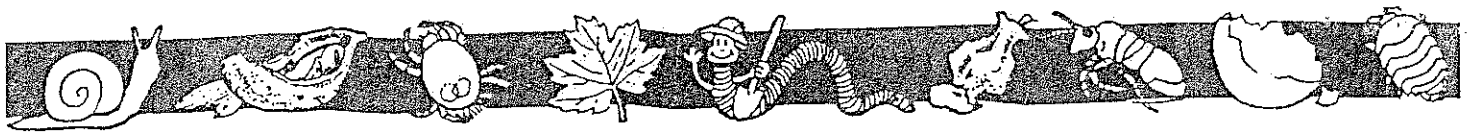
**5.** Don't let us get cold! We like temperatures of 90° to 140°F (32° to 60°C). If your compost pile is too small, we will feel the cold air coming in from the sides.

The best way to keep us warm is to build a pile that is at least 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet (1 meter x 1 meter x 1 meter).

**4.** Don't let us dry out! We need water. Your compost pile should be about as moist as a sponge that has just been wrung out.



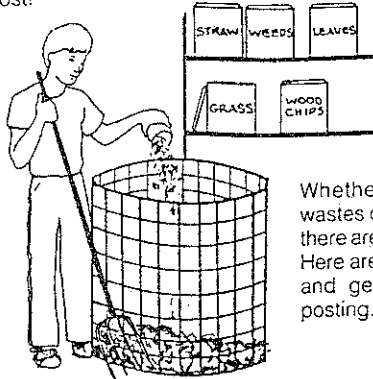
If there is not much rainfall, add water to your compost pile.



# Best Ever Compost

## Just Follow the Recipe!

Composting is like baking a cake. Simply add the ingredients, stir, "bake," and out comes—compost!



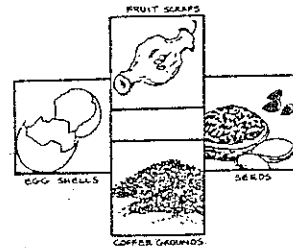
Whether you compost kitchen wastes or yard and garden wastes, there are a few basic steps to follow. Here are the necessary ingredients and general directions for composting.

## Ingredients

### Kitchen Compost

Add a mixture of some or all of the following ingredients:

- vegetable peels and seeds
- fruit peels and seeds
- coffee grounds
- egg shells
- nut shells
- any other vegetable or fruit scraps

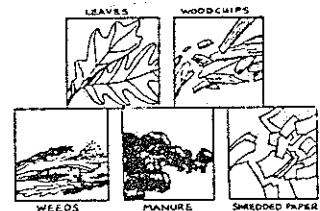


(Do not add meat scraps, bones, dairy products, oils, or fat. They may attract pesty animals.)

### Yard or Garden Compost

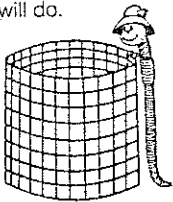
Add a mixture of some or all of the following ingredients:

- hay or straw
- grass clippings
- leaves
- ashes
- sawdust
- wood chips
- weeds and other garden waste
- manure
- shredded paper

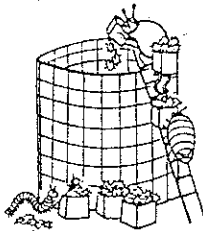


## Directions

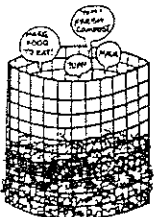
1. Choose a "pot" for baking your compost. Any type of composting bin will do.



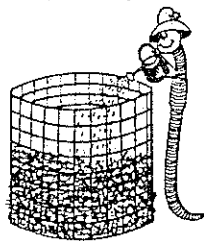
2. Place kitchen or yard wastes into the composting bin. Chop or shred the organic materials if you want them to compost quickly.



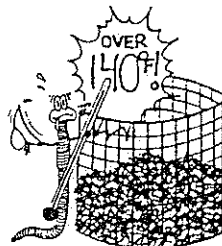
3. Spread soil or "already done" compost over the compost pile. This layer contains the microorganisms and soil animals that do the work of making the compost. It also helps keep the surface from drying out.



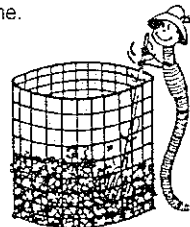
4. Adjust the moisture in your compost pile. Add dry straw or sawdust to soggy materials, or add water to a pile that is too dry. The materials should be damp to the touch, but not so wet that drops come out when you squeeze.



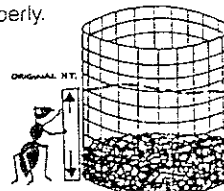
5. Allow the pile to "bake." It should heat up quickly and reach the desired temperature (90° to 140°F, or 32° to 60°C) in four to five days.



6. Stir your compost as it bakes if you want to speed up the baking time.



7. The pile will settle down from its original height. This is a good sign that the compost is baking properly.



8. If you mix or turn your compost pile every week, it should be "done," or ready to use, in one to two months. If you don't turn it, the compost should be ready in about six to twelve months.

9. Your "best ever compost" should look like dark crumbly soil with small pieces of organic material. It should have a sweet, earthy smell.



10. Feed compost to hungry plants by mixing it with the soil.



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# Backyard composting: Anyone can do it

By Janet Macy  
SPECIAL TO THE CITIZEN-HERALD

Earth Machine. Now that's practically an oxymoron. Well, I now own one and can testify that there are no moving parts other than a small sliding door at the base and a lid that twists on and off.

I bought my machine three or so weeks ago, over protests of my landlord, from the garage of a nice woman in Arlington. This below-wholesale coup came thanks to a group called the Arlington Recycling Coalition or some such moniker. I got the very last one from the truckload sale.

A compost bin sell-out seems like a grand achievement to the newly enlightened. As it turns out though, I'm a Johnny-compostately in the game. There are said to be more than four million household composters in North America alone.

A book — "Backyard Composting" — came with my Earth Machine and though I managed to put the thing together correctly before ever opening it, I did learn a great deal from its 96 pages once I picked it up in earnest.

A very nice feature about composting is that it's apparently very hard, if not impossible, to fail. With the minor caution of not placing the bin too near wooden fences or structures which may rot as a result, there's really no way to go wrong.

"Ultimately, compost happens." That's according to the publisher, Harmonious Technologies. We novices find this encouraging news.

One can, however, put wrong things into the compost. These fall into two categories: 1) things that attract rodents, skunks and other foraging creatures — meats, fats, grease — and 2) problem plants. It seems that some plants, particularly weeds, are prone to reseed- ing in the compost pile. Ivy and succulents may also root and begin to grow. These sprouts are more of a problem for open air composters though, as the high temperatures, 140°-150°F, reached in the solar heated Earth Machine usually take care of this glitch.

A few plants may have acids toxic to other plants you like to grow and therefore should be composted in lesser quantities if

you're particular about your crops. Beyond these basics, one can get into the finer points of composting — composting for the connoisseur as it were. Success, in this light, seems to be mainly a function of speed, and in some cases quality; though quality is truly a much finer point than we "recycling composter" types need bother about.

"Backyard Composting" provides recipes and techniques to really speed things up — to under 30 days — if you're hell bent for a deadline. I plan to use the "Lazy Composting" method of just adding, watering, and waiting. With my Earth Machine to speed things up by its own devices, six to 12 months should produce the first shovelful from the sliding door.

The players, animate and inanimate, in the composting drama are depicted in the attached diagrams. Simply stated, the inanimate "browns" and "greens" are what to toss in, roughly half and half is a good mix.

Browns are dry materials such as wood chips, dried leaves, grass and other plants. Greens are fresh, moist materials such as grass cut-

tings and vegetable scraps. Keeping a layer of browns on top ensures against odors and fruit flies. When spring and summer come around again, I'll give some more attention to this.

Meanwhile, winter is more forgiving. Animate players, the book assures, will show up without invitation or coaxing. Although I am toying with the idea of mail-order earthworms, in case there turns out to be a shortage in my backyard.

Earthworms evidently are superstars in the dirt game, replacing both rototillers and fertilizers. Since we're in a cooler climate in New England, a sunny spot is a good choice for location this time of year. A hot summer may warrant relocation to more shade.

As for the inanimate players, the sun will hopefully continue to shine, the rain will continue to fall and oxygen will present itself such that, as promised, "compost happens."

What I expect to find of particular interest is the physical bulk of what I would have added to the waste stream. Once I saw an ad-

Please see COMPOSTING, page 11A



# Backyard composting: Anyone can do it

COMPOSTING, from page 10A

vertisement — a picture of a toddler surrounded by huge piles, literally a mountain of foodstuffs in boxes and bags. The message was an image of human consumption over a lifetime, although as I recall it wasn't a lifetime's worth in the picture, only enough to get the toddler off to college. This made an impression on me which I think will be repeated in seeing the mass of waste I personally generate, just from my kitchen.

The three families I know who have been composters for years all have gardens in the summer. The benefits are more direct in their case. In swaying my landlord to the backyard composting idea, ultimately I had only to offer him the use of the compost and, being a wonderful gardener himself, he quickly became enthusiastic about my Earth Machine. Compost has a monetary value as well as an ecological value it seems. Another friend told me that his brother in England was recently left his deceased neighbor's compost pile; written right in the will it was, I can only suppose that they both had extraordinary gardens.

"In a landfill, organic matter reacts with other materials and creates toxic leachate that may (and probably does) contaminate nearby streams or groundwater," the books says. "Also, the majority of North American landfills will be full by the year 2000."

Add to this the energy costs of moving the garbage from here to there, or the water costs from kitchen disposals and you can no longer in good conscience toss that banana peel anywhere but in the compost. Already we're out of the negative column.

On the positive side, compost benefits the soil, which benefits man and most every other creature we know of. It increases the soil's organic matter constituent, builds sound plant root structure, makes clay soils airy so they drain and gives sandy soils body to hold moisture. It balances soil pH, reduces plant stress from drought and freezes, controls soil erosion, reduces water demands of plants and trees and even extends the growing season. More than that, vitamin and mineral content are much improved in foods grown in compost-rich soils and compost re-

places our reliance upon petrochemical fertilizers which have the opposite effect.

I was shocked to learn a new term, "heirloom varieties." Evidently, from our careless — so-called progressive — ways, "since 1800, the U.S. has lost more than 95 percent of fruit and vegetable varieties."

We've lost so much that "alarmed gardeners and seedmen have formed a network of individual seed collectors and seed companies dedicated to preserving and restoring the genetic diversity of our seed stock," which is nearly lost. We feed on genetically altered, hybrid produce — so-called "new and improved," but we were duped somehow.

"Heirloom and native seed varieties have many beneficial traits, such as higher nutritive quality, superior flavor and color and superior resistance to drought and disease."

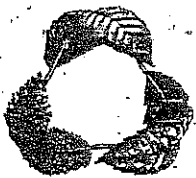
Good soil, coupled with good seeds produces wholesome food. We seem to be alarmingly short of both right now and still slipping.

The following passage from "Sugar Blues," though not scientific

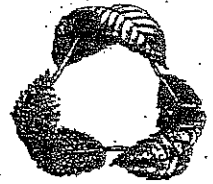
evidence by today's criteria, may well tell us more, if we would listen, than a boat load of dissertations:

Pigs thrive on garbage because they know their way around. Sheep are no dopes either. When artificial fertilizer was first introduced into Britain, one skeptical farmer divided his largest meadow into two parts. He had heard all the new scientific propaganda from Germany about the wonders of store-bought chemical fertilizer but he had some respect for the intelligence and instinct of his four-legged friends. That fall, he used the new manufactured stuff on one half of his meadow; on the other side, he used plain old manure. The following spring, he removed the dividing lines and turned his sheep loose. Within a few days, they were all grazing on the side of the meadow that had been treated in the old-fashioned way. That was scientific evidence enough for him. He never used manufactured fertilizer again.

Walham is currently selling composters for about \$20 each. They have two types to choose from.



## Compost Provides an Alternative to Pesticides and Fertilizers



### Why Does Compost Result in Healthy Plants without Pesticides and Fertilizers?

Good quality compost is the cornerstone of organic gardening and landscaping. The simple truth is that healthy, vigorous plants resist pests and diseases. The best way to raise healthy plants is to have healthy soil, and the best way to have healthy soil is to use compost.

#### Benefits of using compost:

- ❖ Adds organic matter, which is beneficial to soil structure (increases water and nutrient-holding capacity of sandy soils and helps lighten heavy, clayey soils);
- ❖ Provides nutrients, moisture retention and porosity needed to support plant and soil life;
- ❖ A one-time application provides continuous release of the types and amounts of macro and micronutrients plants need in a form they can absorb for about one year;
- ❖ Increases biodiversity – compost adds life to the soil in the form of microbial populations, earthworms, nematodes and a host of other soil dwelling organisms;
- ❖ Helps plants resist disease;
- ❖ Buffers the soil (helps soil maintain a neutral pH, neither too acidic nor too alkaline).

#### Biodiversity in the Soil

Biodiversity is one of the foundations of organic gardening and yard care because organic gardening relies on natural systems to manage pests and enhance growth. Biodiversity makes it possible to control pests without chemicals. Every organism has a natural enemy. If we encourage an environment that is conducive to all species, the pests' natural enemies will keep potential pest populations in check, and none will be able to dominate. Organic practices require tolerance for all creatures and recognition that all have a role to play. As long as biodiversity is maintained, it is unlikely that any species will threaten the overall health of the garden or landscape.

#### Synergistic Effect of Compost's Attributes Results in Healthy Plants

More than any single attribute, it is the combination of attributes possessed by compost that make it so powerful. Individually, the beneficial qualities that compost provides cannot be artificially replicated as successfully, cost-effectively or sustainably. Nor can we technologically create a product that imparts the multitude of beneficial, synergistic effects that compost provides. Not only does compost supply a whole ecosystem of beneficial soil organisms, it also provides all the requirements they need to thrive and multiply – food, moisture-holding humic substances, buffering qualities and enough diversity so none can take over. That is why using high quality compost eliminates the need for synthetic fertilizers and pesticides in our lawns, gardens and landscapes.

**On top of all these horticultural benefits, composting enables us to organically recycle as much as 50% of our household waste.**

## Resources on Composting and Organic Gardening

Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, One Winter St., Boston, MA 02108; (617) 292-5834; [www.mass.gov/dep/recycle](http://www.mass.gov/dep/recycle).

*Biocycle*, pub. JG Press. Trade journal for composting and other organic recycling methods. Excellent source for the latest developments in the field. [www.biocycle.net](http://www.biocycle.net).

*Organic Gardening*, pub. Rodale, Inc., Emmaus PA. A good, practical magazine, full of information about organic gardening techniques. J. I. Rodale, founder of *Organic Gardening*, was one of the most ardent promoters of using compost to improve soil. The magazine regularly includes articles on composting.

Rodale Guide to Composting, Rodale Press. A composting "bible;" good source of information about the role of compost in soil health.

[www.soilfoodweb.com](http://www.soilfoodweb.com) - Informative web site by soil microbiologist Elaine Ingham.

[www.mastercomposter.com](http://www.mastercomposter.com) - Informative web site about home composting.

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Bare feet can't resist luxuriating in thick turf grass. A participant in the Marblehead Pesticide Awareness Committee's class on creating a "living lawn" using organic methods surrendered his toes to the call of the green.

STAFF PHOTO BY  
HOLLY SCHMIDT

# Everyone can grow 'living lawn'

*Organic methods result in healthy, low-maintenance turf*

By JoAnn Augeri Silva  
MARBLEHEAD REPORTER EDITOR

**I**t should come as no surprise that the membership lists of the Marblehead Environmental Coalition, Salem Power Plant HealthLink, Marblehead Pesticide Awareness Committee, and the Marblehead Cancer Prevention Project contain a hefty supply of crossover names. People who understand the connection between a healthy environment and healthy humans also understand the complex, multilay-

ered nature of that connection.

Just as an ostensibly small environmental disaster can affect a huge area, even the smallest environmental projects can have wide application.

Take the "A Living Lawn...A Lawn for Living" project started last year by volunteers Pat Beckett and Chip Osborne with funding from two grants. On a small plot of land at the back of Gatchell's Playground, down the path from the Shore Lea Nature Center, Beckett and Osborne planted four quadrants of lawn using

four different types of organic grass seed. The plot has become a microcosm of the way things could be if the entire area abandoned chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and adopted what Beckett calls "simple steps" to achieving thick, healthy turf.

## 'Simple steps'

The basics, as Beckett described them in a morning class held at the Living Lawn site last week, are indeed simple: assess the lawn and have the soil tested to determine its needs; improve the soil by adding

# Organic methods result in healthy turf

compost and letting grass clippings stay where they fall to provide natural nitrogen; water thoroughly, not frequently, for a total of two inches per week; grow the grass high, leaving the blades about three inches tall and no shorter than two inches; overseed existing lawns to promote thick turf; and mow only with sharp blades, for a cleaner cut.

In addition, there are organic fertilizers and pest control substances gardeners can use to encourage deep roots, discourage weeds, and minimize insect and grub infestations.

The goal of investing time and money in planning, planting, and caring for an organic lawn is, clearly, a lovely swath of turf. In addition, by following Beckett and Osborne's lead, the well-tended organic lawn will practically care for itself beyond watering and mowing. The lawn's nutrient-rich soil will encourage deep roots and dense turf grass that chokes out most weeds (not vice-versa) and resists pest infestations.

## Weed and feed

A dense lawn, mowed high, is the best "herbicide," Beckett says. Weeds are generally the result of compacted soil, use of too much chemical/synthetic fertilizer, not enough re-seeding, and bad watering and mowing habits.

Beckett has little patience for the "four steps" weed and feed method prescribed by chemical companies like Scotts and Monsanto. She says the chemical companies designed the four step program to get homeowners locked into using their products every season. Their products are designed for the "average" lawn, a technique she dismisses because each lawn and garden are unique.

Because each lawn is unique, she and Osborne strongly urge testing the soil in both lawn and garden. Their recommended method is to dig up several plugs of soil from different parts of the lawn, to make up a total of one cup; let the soil dry slightly overnight; then send it via overnight mail to the testing service. If conditions are different in two areas of the yard (a sunny front yard and shady back, for example) one cup should be collected and sent from each area.



Young Colin Nye, 2, spots a pumpkin in one of the vegetable beds at the perimeter of the "living lawn" project.

## Summer is maintenance time

As Beckett and Osborne made clear, in summer, lawns are dormant, so the main things to do are avoidance techniques: minimize "stress" from under-watering; never "scalp" the grass too short; and never cut the lawn with a dull blade, which tears at the grass and makes it both unsightly and more prone to disease.

Since summer is a time when pests proliferate, it's also a good time to apply a dose of beneficial nematodes or milky spore, natural methods of killing Japanese beetle grubs.

As Beckett and Osborne also stress, "assess, assess, assess." Keep an eye on your lawn during this hot month to make sure it gets enough water and is mowed often enough. If you go away on vacation during August and the lawn suffers as a result, an application of diluted fish emulsion can help a lawn recover from such stress. Fish emulsion also will keep the lawn shiny, preventing it from taking on the natural "drab" of August. A top dressing of compost is always welcome. The compost at the Marblehead transfer station, which is available to all residents, has been tested, Beckett says, and has come up "clean."

## Fall: The best time for lawn care

Once the hot summer days are over, it's glory time for lawn care. Fall is the best time to really invest in the

effort it takes to grow a healthy organic lawn, first by testing the soil to find out its strengths and weaknesses, followed by seeding, liming, fertilizing if necessary, and top dressing with compost.

Re-seeding and renovation are best done in fall, Beckett says, adding that it is definitely worth the investment to buy the best seed. Beckett also advises a generous hand when seeding—the plots at Living Lawn are sown with at least twice the amount recommended on the seed packages.

The seed Beckett and Osborne found has done best in the project is North Country Organics Eco-blend (all organic seeds should contain natural "endophytes," a natural insecticide, and should contain a blend of seeds.) Other organic seeds used in the project were Hart's Coastal Mix, Gardens' Alive Turf Alive III blend, and Essex County Co-op's NE Mix #2, but all have now been over-seeded with North Country Organics. The seed is available at Osborne's greenhouse on Ocean Avenue.

Lawn care should continue through October and November, mowing as long as grass is growing, removing leaves as they accumulate, and applying a half-strength dose of organic fertilizer to lawns that have just been seeded or over-seeded. The final mow of the season should break the rules a little, with the mower set at a

two inch cut.

## Think Spring

In spring, the simple steps Beckett encourages also apply. However, spring is also the perfect time to apply a natural herbicide called corn gluten, a natural by-product of the corn milling process. Corn gluten prevents weed seeds from sprouting. Since it also prevents grass seed from sprouting, it can't be used at the same time as re-seeding. To be effective, corn gluten must be applied by April 15.

Spring is also the time to sharpen lawn mower blades, clean up and aerate the soil (an aerator can be rented from the project), top dress with compost, and give the lawn its first mowing with a lowered blade.

## We are the world

Beckett and Osborne are working with the Recreation and Parks and Cemetery Departments to incorporate integrated pest management and organic methods for as much town-owned turf as possible. As Beckett says, the Living Lawn will become "naturalized" over time by surrounding fields and lawns, as their weed and grass seed sow themselves into the demonstration turf and flower beds.

The Living Lawn is one small step toward eliminating chemicals from the millions of acres of lawn Americans squander water and fertilizer on each year. It's designed to show homeowners, communities, and companies how it's possible to encourage healthy turf growth without use of chemicals.

The initial bad news, however, is the cost of organic materials. A first time investment in organic seed, milky spore, fish emulsion, and corn gluten might be prohibitive for a community watching carefully over its budget.

However, Beckett and Osborne strongly believe, the long-term benefits are worth the investment, and pay off in turf that needs only regular maintenance because it's become so healthy.



## GRASS CLIPPINGS

### *Let Them Work For You*

Grass clippings can be put to better use than bagging and disposal. A garbage bag of clippings contains up to 1/4 pound of usable organic nitrogen and other nutrients. You can put this natural fertilizer to work in your lawn or garden and save the time and effort you would have used to rake or empty grass clippings into expensive garbage bags. At the same time, you will save your municipality the cost of disposing of this material, an average of \$60 per ton in Massachusetts. During the summer months, grass clippings can account for 25-40% of residential trash. Save your community money and help improve the environment by recycling this valuable organic material in your own backyard.

Below are three options for utilizing your grass clippings.

#### OPTION 1: LEAVE GRASS CLIPPINGS ON THE LAWN.

##### Why:

Left on the lawn, grass clippings:

- save raking and bagging time and labor.
- add several pounds of nitrogen and other nutrients to your lawn over the course of a season, reducing the need for additional fertilization.
- reduce water evaporation from the lawn and provide a cushioning layer which reduces lawn wear.
- break down quickly because they contain 75-85% water.
- do not contribute to thatch buildup (a layer of undecomposed stems and roots that can build up between the soil and the grass blades).

##### How:

- \* Mow when grass is dry and 3"-4" tall.
- \* Never remove more than 1/3 of the blade in one mowing to avoid injuring the grass plants.
- \* Keep the lawn at a height of 2"-3" to encourage a deep root system and better resistance to drought and stress.
- \* Keep the mower blade sharp to reduce damage to grass.
- \* A mulching mower or mulching attachment are recommended because they produce very small clippings.
- \* Limit the use of herbicides and pesticides and do not over-fertilize your lawn.
- \* If there is more than 1/2" layer of thatch, remove it before leaving clippings on the lawn so the clippings will reach the soil.

## OPTION 2: COMPOST

### Why:

- Grass clippings are a valuable source of nitrogen for your compost pile, especially if you compost a lot of leaves (see the DEP's Backyard Composting brochure).
- In addition to increasing the nutrient value of the finished compost, grass clippings speed up the composting process.

### How:

- \* Mix grass clippings thoroughly with the other material in the pile so they do not become too compacted.
- \* Turn the pile regularly to prevent odors.

## OPTION 3: MULCH

### Why:

- Grass clippings can be used for mulch in your garden or planting beds. Mulching adds nutrients to soil, reduces weed problems, helps retain moisture, and contributes to good soil structure. It also minimizes erosion by protecting the soil surface.

### How:

- \* Spread grass clippings around plants. Do not pile mulch up against the plant stems.
- \* Do not mulch with grass that was recently treated with pesticides. Chemically treated clippings should be left on the lawn or composted. Most herbicides break down in 6-8 weeks.

For more information on yard waste composting contact the Compost Staff at the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection Division of Solid Waste Management at (617) 292-5960 or 292-5834.

For more information on lawn care, maintenance, and renovation, contact your County Cooperative Extension Service.

### References:

University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension; "Lawn Mowing and Efficient Watering," by Dr. Richard J. Cooper, Turfgrass Specialist. Garden Tip Sheet L-551.

University of Massachusetts Cooperative Extension; "Lawn Maintenance and Renovation," by Dr. Richard J. Cooper and Sarah H. Bennett. Garden Tip Sheet L-550.

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Bureaus of Solid Waste Management; "Grass Clippings: Good as Gold for Your Lawn," by Wendy McCown. PUBL-SW-073 87.

Prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Solid Waste Management, One Winter Street, 4th Floor, Boston, MA 02108.

BOARD OF HEALTH  
TOWN OF BELMONT

NUISANCE REGULATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 111, Sections 31 and 122 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws, the Belmont Board of Health hereby adopts the following regulations, which were first effective on July 1, 1991, and are being amended effective October 1, 1995:

**Section I: Definitions**

- 1 ) Rubbish means combustible and non-combustible waste materials, except garbage, including but not limited to such material as paper and paper products, cartons, containers, boxes, rags, leather, packing materials wood, bottles, glassware, cans, plastics, and the like. For purposes of these regulations, rubbish will include all items described as recyclables for purposes of curbside pick-up.
- 2 ) Garbage means the animal, vegetable or other organic waste resulting from the handling, preparing, cooking, consumption or cultivation of food, containers and cans which have contained food, unless said containers and cans have been cleaned or prepared for recycling. Garbage is essentially food waste.
- 3 ) Town barrel means trash containers owned and maintained by the Town, placed throughout the town on public land for the purpose of disposal of single use items, including but not limited to, paper cups, candy wrappers, paper napkins, lunchbags, juice boxes, etc.
- 4 ) Household trash means a quantity of mixed garbage and rubbish, usually containerized in plastic or paper bags, that would ordinarily be put out for curbside pick-up in plastic bags, boxes or watertight, covered barrels.
- 5 ) Yard waste means grass clippings, weeds, hedge clippings, garden materials and branches one inch or less in diameter.
- 6 ) Compost bin means any device constructed for the orderly and proper decomposition of raw vegetable matter, leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste. The bin can be constructed of wood, wire, plastic, metal, etc., anything which will discourage disturbance by animals or rodents.

**Section II: Regulations**

- 1 ) The owner of any building used for business or habitation shall be responsible for maintaining the building and property around the building in a sanitary condition free of garbage, rubbish, and other filth or health hazards.

- 2 ) No individual, or commercial establishment, shall dispose of rubbish or garbage, generated in a home or the commercial establishment, in Town barrels for any reason.
- 3 ) Composting in the Town must be done in a bin and according to accepted standards. No open compost piles are allowed because of their attraction to rodents and other wildlife. Composting of raw vegetable matter must be done in a type of container with a lid, which due to its design excludes rodents, insects and wildlife.
- 4 ) Owners of dogs are responsible for removing dog feces from their own property at least weekly, putting it in paper or plastic bag, and disposing of it in their own household trash put out for curbside pick-up.

### Section III: Penalty

- 1 ) Any person found to be in violation of these regulations may be fined the sum of \$50.00 under the Non-Criminal Disposition By-law of the Town of Belmont.
- 2 ) Each separate day's failure to comply with an order of the Board of Health shall constitute a separate violation.
- 3 ) If any clause, section, paragraph, sentence or phrase of these rules and regulations shall be decided invalid for any reason whatsoever, such decision shall not affect the remaining portions of these regulations, which shall remain in full force and effect, and to this end the provisions of these regulations are hereby declared severable.

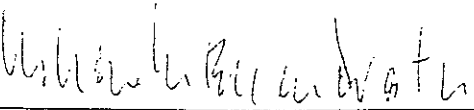
### BOARD OF HEALTH



David B. Alper, D.P.M.

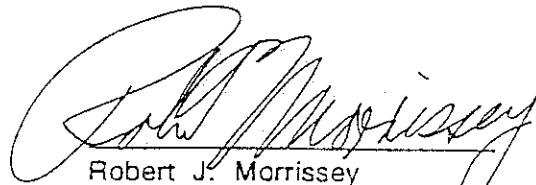


Donna S. David, R.N., M.N.



Robert M. Eisendrath, M.D.

Approved As To Form:



Robert J. Morrissey  
Town Counsel

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Citizen Herald: 12/28/95