



Slow Food® Barbados EDUCATIONAL GARDENS

Composting with Bins by CPRI

Composting is a natural, biochemical process which results in the decomposition of organic matter into a nutrient-rich, soil-like product. This process is facilitated by bacteria, fungi, worms, and many other microorganisms. Decomposition is nature's way of recycling plants, insects and other organisms back into the soil that supported them when they were alive. When we compost our food scraps and garden trimmings, we are mimicking this natural decomposition process. The finished compost can then be used to improve the quality of our garden soil. Another major benefit of backyard composting is the diversion of compostable materials from the landfill, where they decompose in an environment without air and release greenhouse gases.

Ok To Compost	NOT For This Compost Model
Fruit & Veggie scraps	Meat or bones
Rinsed eggshells	Dairy products
Shredded newsprint	Bread
Coffee grounds/teabags	Cooked food
Garden trimmings	Weeds gone to seed
Leaves/grass clippings	Diseased plants
Human or pet hair (small quantities)	Weeds with rhizomes (e.g. morning glory)
	Cat & dog feces

This Compost Model

- Keeps rodents and other small animals out
- Makes for easy management and containment of the compost - i.e. easy to aerate and harvest

For Best Results

- The smaller you chop your kitchen scrapes and garden waste the quicker the decomposition process – compost within 6-8 weeks

- Layer brown and green organic matter at a 2 to 1 ratio (2 handfuls of brown matter over 1 handful of green matter)
- Moisture is important - keep the organic material as wet as a wrung-out sponge
- Spin your composter 1x per week
- Place your composter in a convenient partially sunny/shady spot
- To accelerate the decomposition stage, use EM (effective microorganism) available through CPRI at the Graeme Hall Market (GHM)

Greens (N - Nitrogen)	Browns (C - Carbon)
Fruit and veggie scraps	Fallen leaves
Fresh grass clippings	Straw
Fresh leaves (e.g. moringa, flamboyant)	Dry grass clippings
Fresh weeds and plants	Chipped woody debris
Eggshells (rinse & finely crushed)	Shredded newspaper (not glossy)
Fresh animal manure (horse, chicken, cow)	Sawdust (sparingly)

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SEE OVERLEAF AS WELL

1. To always mix 2 thirds of browns (Dried leaves, twigs with 1 third of fresh green (leaves, flowers) or wet stuff (watermelon , banana, peels)
2. Cut everything as small as possible to accelerate the composting process
3. Keep in each classroom a bucket with a lid to place the fruit peels and veggies to empty once it is full , at the end of the day in the compost bin.
4. Always add 1-2 handfuls of grass clippings or dried leaves to cover the fresh organic matter from the classroom bin.
5. Rinse the bucket with some water and pour it inside the compost bin making sure both corners and not only the center receive the liquid that will drain and just leave some moisture.
6. Turn the compost bin or better use a garden fork to turn once or twice a week the organic matter.

One compost bin for one school is very little space to collect all organic matter coming from lunches and snacks of many kids. Therefore, it will be recommended to make a compost pile or two with chicken wire if the volume of greens and raw food is higher than the compost bin can carry.

7. There should be only a couple of students that each week are in charge of the classroom bucket and compost bin. Important to make sure they are all aware of what goes and what does not go in the compost bin.

If the compost bin smells, it is too wet and needs more oxygen (turn it)

If it is too dry it needs some water

If it is right, it should smell good, look a bit moist and dark and have lots of little creatures doing the job

8. Adding a handful of earthworms helps the process, since they cannot reach the bins from the ground. If those are added, the garden fork has to be used gently to avoid hurting them and avoid adding too many citrus or onions and garlic because they can harm their skin.
9. If earthworms are added the compost bin should be better under a tree or in a semi shaded spot.



Important to know who will be in charge of the gardens when the school term is over because it is important to turn the organic matter at least every other week and to add some water to make sure the process is going well.