

# Composting Fact Sheet

## Quick facts about composting:

- Composting recycles food scraps, garden waste and other organic wastes into humus, commonly referred to as compost
- Composting reduces organic waste in landfills, helping to mitigate issues surrounding leachate and greenhouse gas emissions
- Compost helps to lock carbon (upon which all living organisms are based) into the soil, thus reducing carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
- Applying compost to your garden allows soils to breathe, ensuring plants are healthy and vibrant
- Mature compost applied to your garden increases the water holding capacity of the soil.
- Compost holds a smorgasbord of different nutrients for plants

## What is composting?

Composting is the common name we give to the natural decomposition of organic matter into a soil-like material called 'humus' or 'compost'. This process of decomposition occurs through the action of beneficial microscopic organisms and other living creatures in healthy soils. Composting organic matter, such as food and garden waste, can be done at your home, school or workplace through the use of a compost bin or heap.

## Why compost?

By composting food and garden waste, we can dramatically reduce the amount of organic waste sent to landfill in everyday garbage. By reducing organic waste to landfill we can reduce the potential for landfills to create liquid 'leachates' that can pollute our streams, lakes and underground water, and also reduce the production of methane gas which is a powerful greenhouse gas. Transforming food and garden waste into rich black soil through your own compost at home, school or workplace, is extremely useful and satisfying.

## How is composting done?

Various organic materials including food scraps, grass clippings, woody vegetation and other organic materials are mixed together in a compost bin or heap. Under the correct conditions, beneficial microbes and other small creatures will begin to actively decompose the material. Over time, your waste will be turned into nutrient-rich soil-like compost.