

Backyard Composting in
the City



133 BILLION POUNDS OF

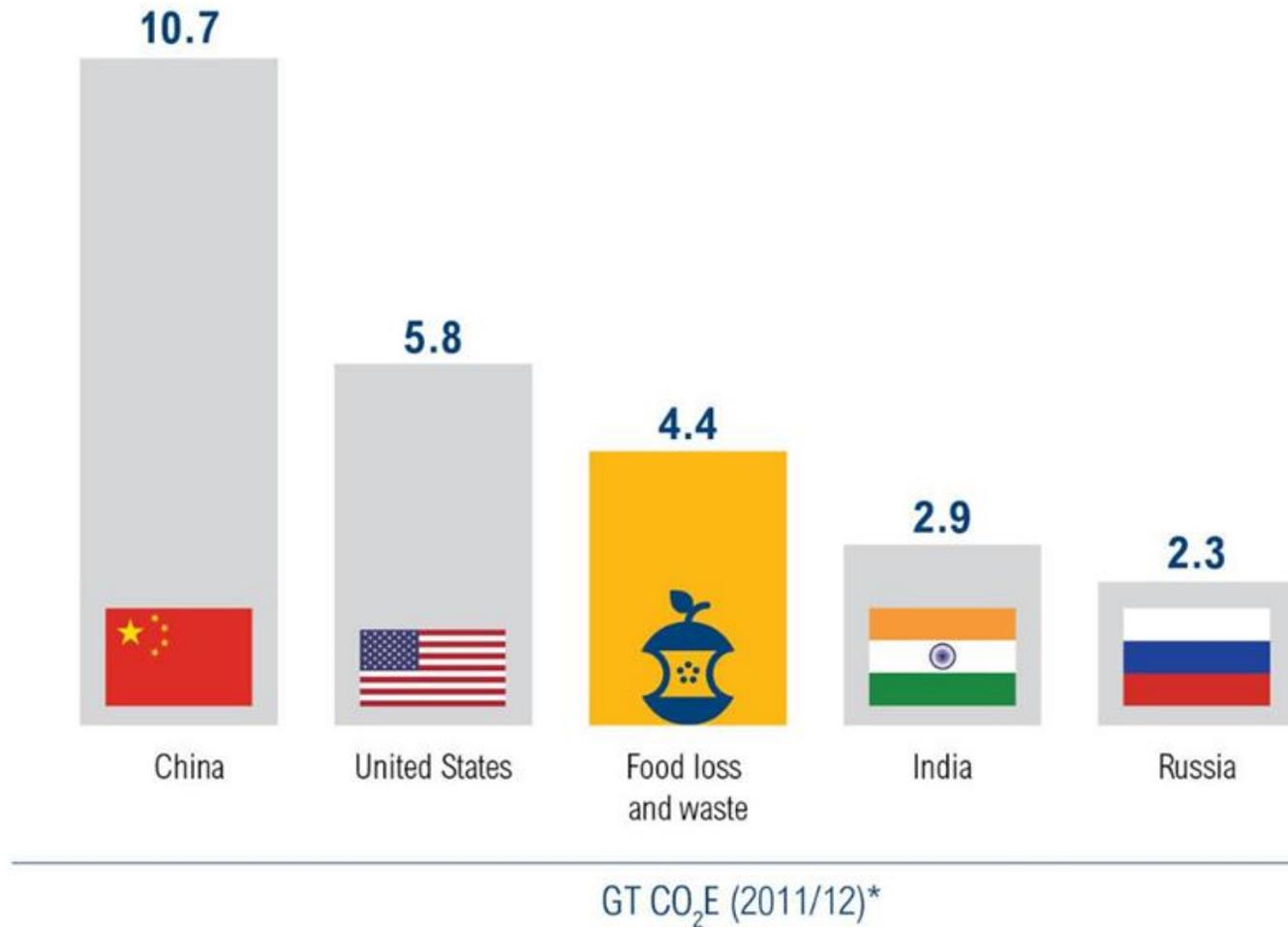


is **WASTED** in the USA every year



Source: USDA (2010 report)

IF FOOD
WASTE WERE A
COUNTRY IT
WOULD BE THE
**THIRD-
LARGEST**
GREENHOUSE
GAS EMITTER



* Figures reflect all six anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions, including those from land use, land-use change, and forestry (LULUCF). Country data is for 2012 while the food loss and waste data is for 2011 (the most recent data available). To avoid double counting, the food loss and waste emissions figure should not be added to the country figures.

Source: CAIT. 2015; FAO. 2015. *Food wastage footprint & climate change*. Rome: FAO.

FOOD WASTE STOP IT BEFORE IT STARTS

Only buy what you need

**Share the excess with
friends**

Meal plan

**Try BluApple Ethylene Gas
Absorbers to keep produce
fresh longer**

**Use more of the food
you buy**

- Make fruit leather or smoothies with overripe fruit
- Make vegetable stock with carrot tops, onion and garlic skins, and celery ends
- Freeze leftovers or large packs of veggies and berries before they spoil

Food Forests' Living Web

A Web of Life

A food forest is designed to link food crops together in a web of life similar to that of other forests. Our web engages plants, animals, and fungi to help with gardening tasks. We grow a whole forest, not just food, and we get pest control, weed control, fertilizers, water storage, and a beautiful space for people.

All fruits start as pollinated flowers.



Ladybugs and green lacewing larva protect budding fruit from aphids and thrips.



Seedbugs save leaves from leathoppers.



Helping Flowers Become Fruit
The food forest builds habitat for predators and pollinators that tend our flowers and fruits as they grow.

Building Soil

Worms, fungi, and other soil life eat dead leaves, creating top soil full of precious nutrients that plants can absorb easily.



Slowing Water to Protect Soil

Layers of plants slow down speeding raindrops to lessen their impact.

Rain drops can fall at 30 miles per hour, breaking apart and crushing exposed soil.

Mulch, such as leaves and woodchips, protects the soil's delicate networks of roots, sand, organic matter, and hyphae (fungal roots).



A plum tree may take 5 to 10 years to mature, and with care it can produce plums for decades.

Storing Water

Good soil structure provides air space for soil life and acts as a sponge, storing water for our dry summers.

Cleaning Water

Like a carbon filter used to clean water, soil with a lot of organic content (carbon) cleans stormwater.

Roots pull up minerals trapped in rocks.



Groundwater

ART BY MOLLY DANIELSON



- Adds nutrients to the soil
- Improves water percolation
- Helps retain moisture
- Reduces run off and erosion
- Saves money on fertilizers
- Saves money on groceries if you grow edibles
- Is a natural fertilizer

COMPOST

YOUR FOOD SCRAPS

Compost should NOT smell unpleasant

Compost should NOT attract pests

Compost is good for edible plants, potted plants, tropical and ornamental landscaping, and lawns

Compost does not run off and pollute waterways like chemical fertilizer.

Compost builds soil health over time

You can reduce your waste by composting

It's EASY!!!

MEET FLUFFY



What Does Compost Need?



HOW TO GET STARTED

Decide what type of composting system you want and where to put it

Begin saving lawn waste – leaves, small sticks, organic grass clipping

Choose a container to save your kitchen waste

Worms?

Start composting!



COMPOST SYSTEM OPTIONS



Worm bin –
vermiculture
towers, tubes
or bins

Closed
Systems-
tumblers,
barrels,
plastic tubs

Open Systems
– wire frame,
pallets, big
heap on the
ground

CONTAINERS





WHERE TO LOCATE YOUR COMPOST

Put your compost pile where it's convenient for YOU to access it.

- Sun or shade, doesn't matter
- Water access
- Room to maneuver with shovels, pitchforks and a wheelbarrow or bucket
- Where you'll REMEMBER to use it and tend to it

Preferably at least 6 feet from your house or garage

Away from the property line

Don't use a building or fence as the back of your compost pile

Don't put your compost under the eaves of a building

BROWNS – 60% OF THE PILE

Do Compost

Dried leaves
 Mulch
 Small sticks
 Shredded white paper
 White paper – junk mail
 Brown cardboard
 Dried grass
 Shrub prunings
 Wood shavings
 Sawdust
 Straw (no chemicals/untreated)

Do NOT Compost

Diseased plants
 Chemically treated straw or hay
 Colored paper
 Construction paper
 Carbon paper
 Glittered paper
 Plastic, cellophane or packing tape
 Treated wood



Recycling Drop-off Sites & FREE Recycled Mulch Pick-up Sites

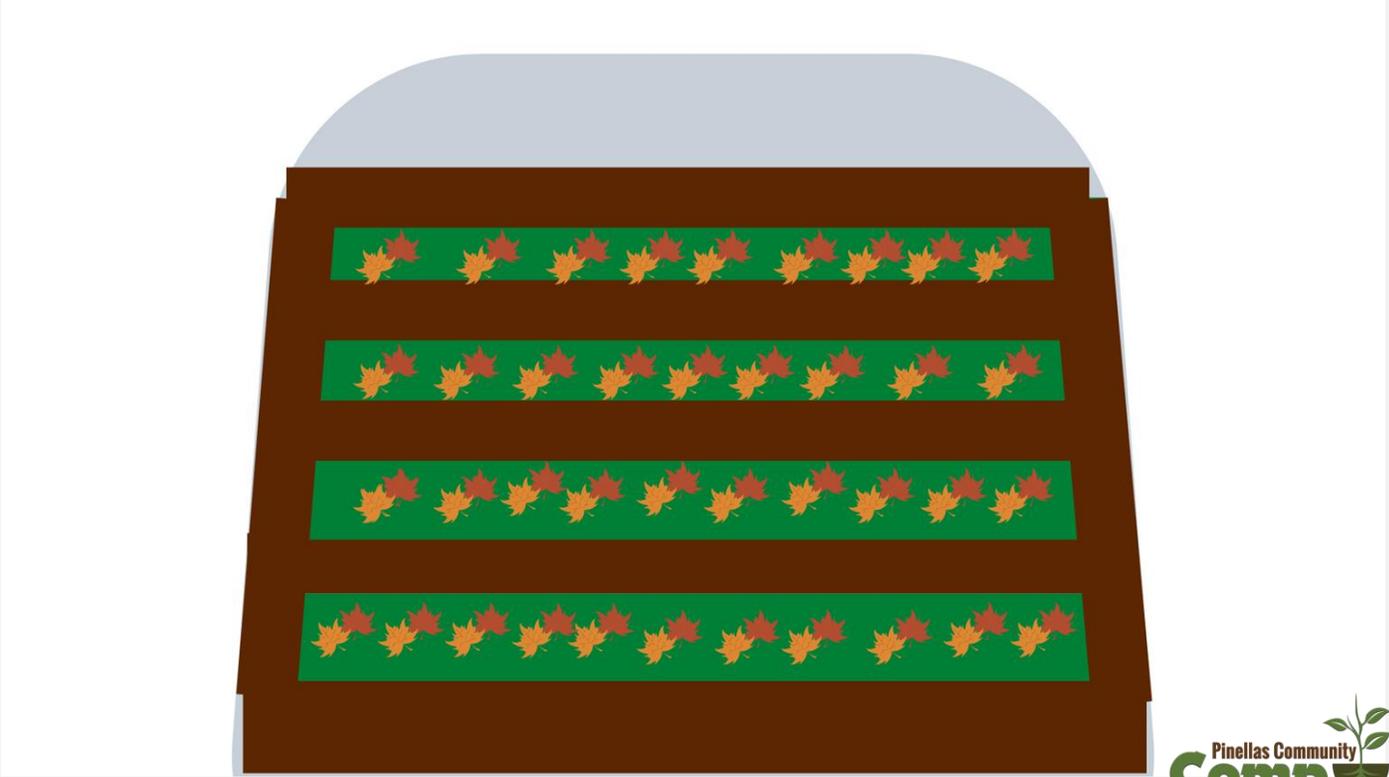
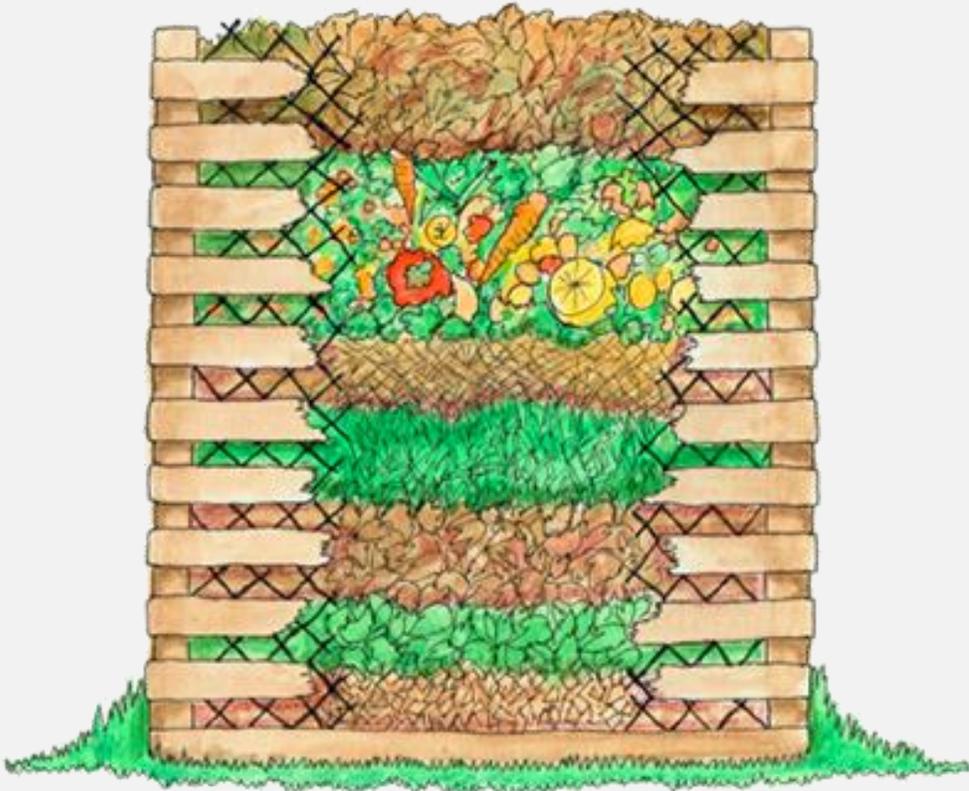
- 4** **A.L. Anderson Park**
39699 U.S. 19 N, Tarpon Springs
- 6** **John Chesnut Sr. Park**
2200 East Lake Rd., Palm Harbor
- 7** **Cypress Forest Recreation Center**
200 feet north of 650 Pine Ave. N, Oldsmar
- 10** **Lake Haven Recycling Center**
817 Lake Haven Rd., Dunedin
- 13** **Safety Harbor Public Works**
1200 Railroad Ave., Safety Harbor
- 14** **Clearwater Solid Waste Facility**
1701 N Hercules Ave., Clearwater
- 19** **Starkey Road Drop-off Recycling Center**
1551 Starkey Rd., Largo
- 23** **Beach Art Center**
Behind 1515 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach
- 28** **Waste Management Brush Site**
12950 40th St. N, Pinellas Park
- 29** **Walsingham Park**
12615 102nd Ave. N, Largo
- 31** **Pinellas County Solid Waste**
3095 114th Ave. N, St. Petersburg
- 32** **Pinellas County Solid Waste**
2855 109th Ave. N, St. Petersburg
- 36** **City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Site**
1000 62nd Ave. N, St. Petersburg
- 38** **Bicentennial Park**
East of 565 Tom Stuart Causeway, Madeira Beach
- 43** **City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Site**
7500 26th Ave. N, St. Petersburg
- 45** **Rosselli Park, Isle of Capri**
Capri Circle S at Second St. SE, Treasure Island
- 48** **City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Site**
2453 20th Ave. N, St. Petersburg
- 57** **49th Street Neighborhood Center**
1617 49th St. S, Gulfport
- 58** **City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Site**
2500 26th Ave. S, St. Petersburg
- 59** **City of St. Petersburg Recycling/Brush Site**
4015 Dr. MLK Jr. St. S, St. Petersburg

Be sure to come prepared with a tarp or vehicle cover to keep your mulch load secured, as required by law!

GREENS – 40% OF THE PILE

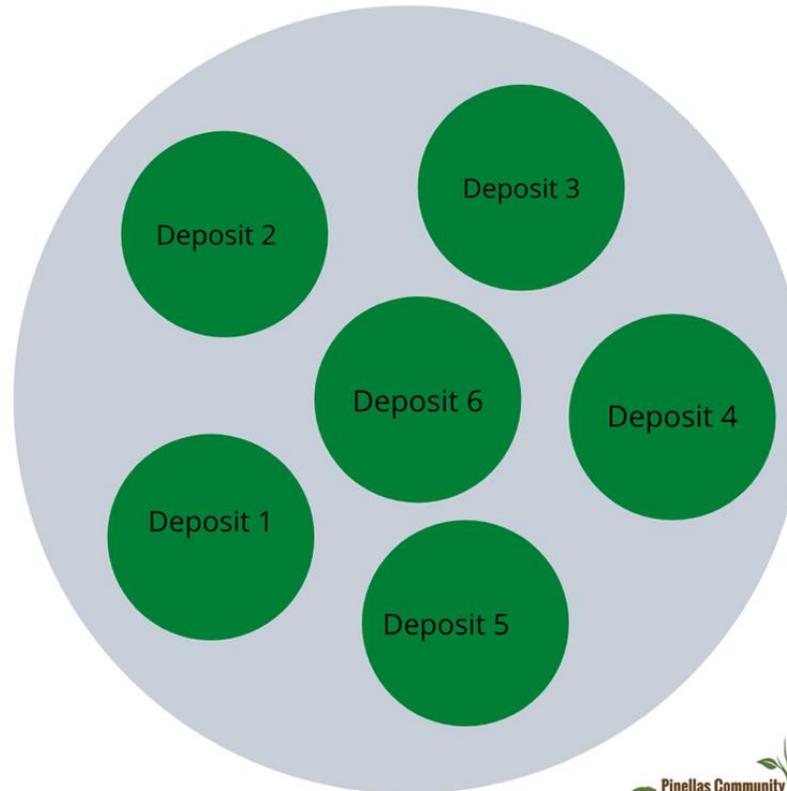
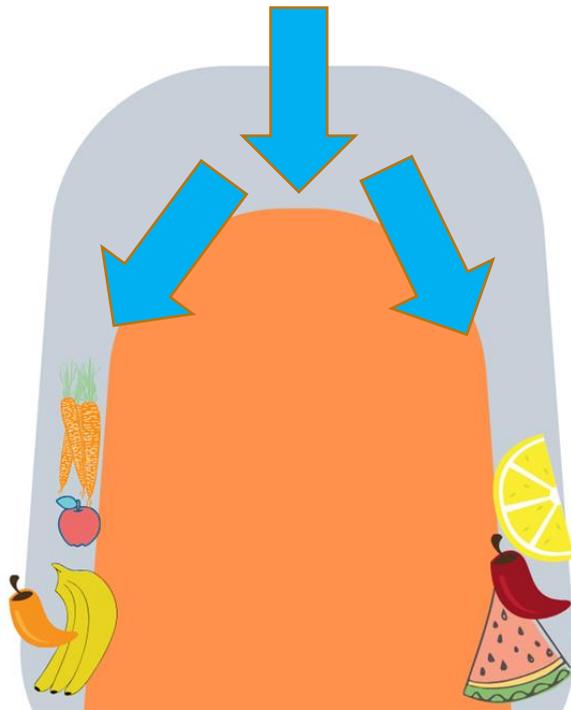
Do Compost	Do NOT Compost
<p>Coffee grounds and filters</p> <p>Fruit and vegetable peels, cores and scraps</p> <p>Egg shells</p> <p>Onion peels</p> <p>Citrus</p> <p>Herbivore manure</p> <p>Human and pet hair</p> <p>Nail clippings</p> <p>Grass clippings</p> <p>Garden waste</p> <p>Cut flowers</p> <p>Leftover coffee, wine, juice and beer</p> <p>Kombucha SCOBY's</p> <p>Grains – crackers, oatmeal, stale or moldy bread</p>	<p>Meat</p> <p>Dairy</p> <p>Oils, grease and fats</p> <p>Bones</p> <p>Pet waste</p> <p>Kitty litter</p> <p>Human waste</p> <p>Weed seeds</p> <p>Invasive plants</p> <p>Diseased plants</p> <p>Produce stickers</p> <p>Rubber bands</p> <p>Commercial compost bioplastics – you can try but they likely won't break down in your backyard compost</p>

MIX THE BROWNS AND GREENS



ADDING TO YOUR COMPOST PILE

Avoid a Mountain in the Middle



WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CONTAINER BIN IS FULL

You will eventually need to stop adding to your bin for the compost to cure, or finish. Here are some options:

- After about a month, you CAN empty out your tumbler or container bin on to the ground. Most food scraps are no longer recognizable and it will be less likely to attract critters. Cover it with a piece of cardboard or landscape fabric and allow it to finish composting.
- Get another compost bin while your first bin is finishing.
- Consider using a few different types of composters to see which you prefer, including DIY bins.

MAINTENANCE

Turn

Gets air into the pile so the microbes can breathe

Turn once every week or two

Water

60% Moisture – it should feel like a damp sponge

Add water if needed when you turn the pile

Observe

Notice what's going on: Odor, Moisture, Pests, Insects

More observation will help you make better compost

TROUBLESHOOTING

Odor

- Your compost should not be stinky
- Black flies and fruit flies are the 1st indicators of odor
- Add more browns to the top and sides of the pile
- Be careful not to add meat or dairy

Too Wet

- Consider the location of your pile – is it under the eaves or in a low area?
- Add more browns and turn
- Uncover it during sunny days, cover during the rain

Too Dry

- Add water and turn
- You may need to repeat several times if your compost is really dry
- Remember to keep your compost covered
- Uncover during rain

CRITTER HELPERS



HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

IT DEPENDS. On average 3-12 months

Increases composting rate:

- Maintaining 60% moisture levels,
- Turning,
- 40% greens, 60% brown ratio.

Decreases composting rate:

- Dry compost
- Not turning
- Too much brown



HOW TO TELL IF MY COMPOST IS READY

- There are NO visible food scraps
- Compost has a pleasant earthy smell
- It looks like soil, with some browns maybe not broken down yet

Germination Test

Take some compost and put it in small pots. Plant some fast germinating seeds (radish, lettuce, tomato) and see if they grow. If they grow and produce true leaves, it is likely done. If not, let the compost cure longer.

Bag Test

Put some finished compost in a Ziploc bag and place it in a dark room for 3 days. When you open it, if it smells like ammonia, it isn't done.

IT'S DONE, NOW WHAT?



- Top dress your potted plants and garden beds
- Spread it around your shrubs and tropical landscaping
- Sprinkle or spread in a thin layer on your lawn, especially any areas that are bare
- Add to potting mix

- SIFT it and use it in a seed starting mix or potting mix



Questions or comments?

Thank you!