



**GreenTip**  
How Do You Measure Up?



## **It's Fall – A Great Time To Compost!**

With all those leaves available out there on your lawn, fall is an ideal time to compost and a great way to “green” your household. Composting is not complicated or difficult. Here’s some information to get you started.

### **Some Reasons To Consider Composting:**

- Composting keeps useful materials, like food scraps and garden /lawn waste out of the landfill.
- Composting saves our community money. Even though most yard waste is recycled when you bag it and put it out with your trash, it still requires the use of trucks, labor and fuel to collect, transport and process it.
- By using compost, you save money on fertilizer, garden supplies and water.
- You can improve your soil, your lawn and your garden by using compost.
- Using compost instead of other lawn and garden chemicals keep pollutants out of the environment.

### **How To Choose Your Composting Materials:**

- Your compost pile should include a mixture of “browns” – materials rich in carbon -- and “greens” – materials rich in nitrogen. Typically, use a mixture of about 75% “browns” and 25% “greens”.

#### **“Browns” - dried and rich in carbon**

- leaves
- chopped branches and twigs
- straw
- shredded paper and paper towels

#### **“Greens” – fresh and rich in nitrogen**

- grass clippings and fresh hay
- vegetable and fruit scraps
- eggshells, bread, grains, pasta
- tea bags, coffee grounds and filters

- Use soil to cover your compost mixture and to provide the microorganisms needed in the process.

#### **•DON'T use these materials in your compost pile:**

- cat and dog manure, which may contain disease organisms
- charcoal ash, which may contain toxic compounds
- meats, grease, bones, dairy products or cooking oil that may attract rodents and other pests.
- treated wood
- weeds and diseased plants
- pine needles or magnolia leaves that take a very long time to decompose
- plants treated with herbicides or pesticides

## **How To Use Your Compost:**

- Mulch – spread 1” to 3” around plants and over bare spots to prevent erosion, help control weeds and conserve water.
- Soil Amendment – work 2” to 3” into the top 6” of soil each time you start a new garden or plant trees or shrubs.
- Potting Mix – sift your compost through a ¼” screen and mix one part with two parts potting soil.

## **More information about how to get started composting:**

- Guilford County Agricultural Extension Office – (336) 375-5876
- [www.p2pays.org/compost/](http://www.p2pays.org/compost/)