

# GUIDE TO BACKYARD COMPOSTING



## WHY COMPOST?

When you compost, you can reduce what you are sending to the landfill by about 50 percent! It's even easier than recycling!

## HOW TO COMPOST

# 1

### DECIDE ON A LOCATION THAT HAS:

- Easy access for your convenience.
- Bare soil for microorganisms to enter the compost from beneath.
- Flat ground for good drainage.

# 2

### ORGANIZE INDOORS:

- Collect food scraps in the kitchen in a container with a tight lid to keep fruit flies away/minimize odor — or store in your fridge/freezer.
- Chop up larger items like watermelon and pumpkins.

# 3

### ADD YOUR INGREDIENTS:

- Empty your kitchen container into your compost bin once a week. Stir in your new material to the top layer.
- Cover your food scraps with a three-inch layer of leaves, etc.

# 4

### HARVEST:

- Wait six to twelve months and let nature do its work. It's ready when the compost is dark brown and earth-like!

## THE FOUR SEASONS OF COMPOSTING

### SPRING:

Stir your bin and add some dirt to kickstart it.



### SUMMER:

Stir your bin. If the material looks dry, add some water to moisten it.



### FALL:

Stir your bin.



### WINTER:

Decomposition slows down; let your bin fill up.



# WHAT TO COMPOST

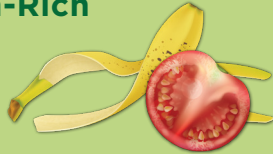
Your bin will work best if it's fed a varied diet of nitrogen-rich greens and carbon-rich browns.

## FRESH GREENS

### Nitrogen-Rich



Grass and plant trimmings



Fruits and vegetables



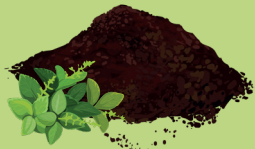
Egg shells



Bread and other grains



Beans, nuts and shells



Tea leaves and coffee grounds

NO produce bags, stickers, rubber bands or twist ties.

## DRY BROWNS

### Carbon-Rich



Dead leaves, straw and hay



Broken up sticks and wood chips



Coffee filters



Shredded paper



Compostable paper products  
(No plastic-lining; tear up)

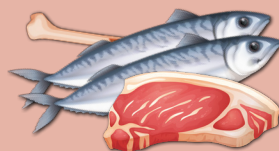


Paper towels and napkins

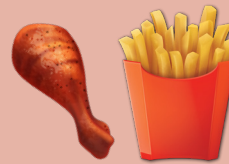
## KEEP THESE OUT!



Plastic-coated (shiny) paper plates



Meat, fish and bones\*



Food cooked with grease\*



Dairy products\*



Certified compostable products\*



Plastic-coated (shiny) to-go containers



To-go hot and cold drink cups



Snack wrappers

\* These items are compostable ONLY in commercial compost piles, not in your back yard.



Currituck County Public Works

252-232-2504

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