

# Composting

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*Image provided by City Compost*

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Hi! [Olivia here from One More Generation!](#)

Remember how [back in December I wrote about gardening and composting](#) on my holiday list? Well, do I have some news for you! It turns out these go hand and hand! At first, I thought compost was just something that you put in your garden that was good for plants. With all the information I have discovered, I learned there is so much more.

Let's start with the definition of 'compost'.

## **Definition of Compost(ing)**

- A mixture of organic matter, as from leaves and manure, that has decayed or has been digested by organisms, used to improve soil structure and provide nutrients. ([from the Free Dictionary by Farlex](#))
- Composting is nature's process of recycling decomposed organic materials into a rich soil known as compost. Anything that was once living will decompose. Basically, backyard composting is an acceleration of the same process nature uses. By composting your

organic waste you are returning nutrients back into the soil in order for the cycle of life to continue. Finished compost looks like soil—dark brown, crumbly, and smells like a forest floor. ([from San Mateo County RecycleWorks](#))

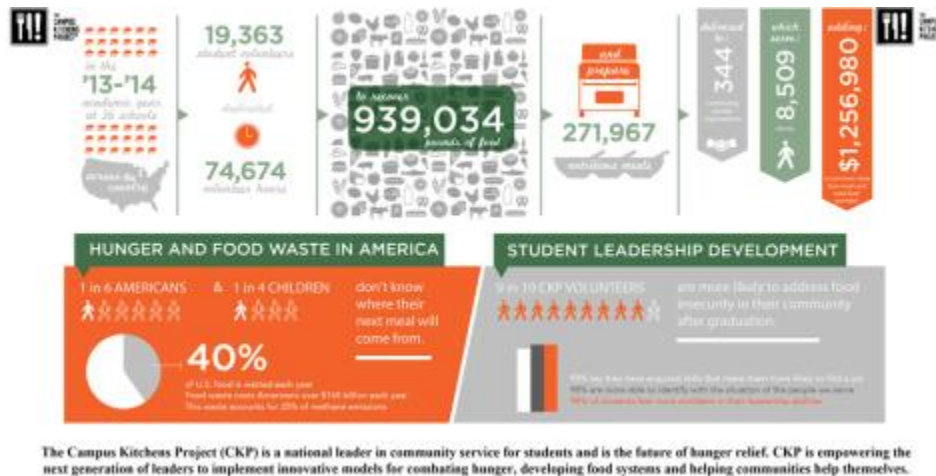
- Decaying material of plants, unwanted food, etc., added to dirt to improve the growth of new plants. ([from the Cambridge Dictionary](#))
- And here is a great definition of residential composting: Composting is just nature’s way of recycling. By definition, composting is the controlled decomposition of organic material such as leaves, twigs, grass clippings, and vegetable food waste. Compost is the valuable soil product that results from proper composting. Composting helps to keep the high volume of organic material out of our landfills and turns that material into a useful product. With organics making up a significant part of our municipal waste, onsite composting reduces the cost of hauling garbage and operating landfills. Compost is great for gardens and landscaping, and you can save money by buying less soil conditioner, mulch, and fertilizer. ([from City of Eastvale CA](#))

No matter how you define it, composting is just plain cool and a great idea. Did you know that the UN actually declared 2015 the [International Year of Soil](#)! Soil is the foundation of our food system, but unfortunately, fields that once were rich with deep, nutritious soil are thinning out. On top of the soil depleting around the world it is unbelievable how much food we waste here at home. [Forty percent of the food we grow in the USA ends up being thrown away](#), while there are a whole lot of people who suffer with hunger. By composting, we can connect the dots between soil depletion and food waste. The smallest, easiest change to make at home is just putting peels, leftovers, and expired foods into a different can. This simple compost starter ends up going back to rebuilding the soil. This way what we do not eat for dinner tonight can become dinner down the way. It’s what nature intended!!

Check out the trailer of this cool video because nothing builds up the soil like composting!!

Click here to watch “DIRT! The Movie TRAILER”: <https://youtu.be/TKPcuwOOGqY>

We also found this infographic created by the folks at [The Campus Kitchens Project](#), which shows the amount of food waste in America alone:



*Image obtained from the website of The Campus Kitchens Project (CKP)*

I was amazed to find out how many other benefits there are to composting. Composting reduces greenhouse gas emissions and fights climate change. It also increases the ability for soil to absorb water so we conserve more. You know we are all about conservation here at OMG! Most importantly, it puts nutrients back into the soil to grow more food. This way we all benefit!

My brother and I are excited about putting our compost to work and planting our garden this spring! I really like carrots. Delicious! They are so much better than chips! What is your favorite vegetable? If you do not have a garden, ask your parents to help you build your first one this spring! If you live in a place with no yard, it doesn't matter! [You can actually grow many things inside too!](#)

Regardless of whether you have a garden, make sure you are composting! There is actually this awesome organization I came across that does all the work for you: [City Compost](#). They work with families both big and small so they do not have to spend time and energy required to manage a compost pile. All the compost they make actually goes back to you and any extra goes off to farms! I learned a boatload about composting from talking with Adam Jankauskas who started City Compost. Check out City Compost's mission statement, I think it says it all:



*Image provided by City Compost.*

***The mission at City Compost is to enable an abundance of food for all. Every bit of organic material that is thrown away regardless of suitability for consumption still contains valuable nutrients that can be returned to the food system if properly handled. It is not a waste. City Compost focuses on saving these nutrients and returning them to the soil to create an abundance of fresh, healthy produce for all.***

Adam shared two more important pieces of information:

“There is a common misconception that dairy, grains, and meat will not compost. This is a mistake. At home, they can attract dangerous wild animals so are best to avoid, but when you use a service like [City Compost](#), these are okay to include. Also, there is actually a lot more to composting than most realize. The size of the pieces and pile, the amount of water, how the material is balanced, and even how often it is turned come into play. City Compost keeps all of these in mind when we compost. We handle the entire process and then give all the compost back to our customers with service.”

With both soil depletion *and* hunger being worldwide issues, it is very important for us to stop wasting food and save every bit we can. The truth is everyone should be composting. Don't you agree?

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