

Best Management Practices for Composting

Rationale

The research, teaching and display greenhouses on the Ithaca campus generate a large amount of waste plant material, media and other organic waste. To reduce solid waste, organic waste is composted on site or through the department of Farm Services in the College of Agriculture and

Life Sciences. Specially designed compost bins are used to store the waste and eliminate environmental impact from excess run-off due to rain and snowmelt. Compost waste is removed upon request of greenhouse staff and efforts are made to prevent bins from being over-full, thus reducing environmental impact from odor and compost theft. Signs on compost bins describe appropriate and inappropriate compostable materials.

Environmental Principle: Environmental impact is reduced when organic waste is composted and compost is properly stored and promptly removed.

| Operational Aspects | Environmental Assurance >> | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
| Overview | | | |
| Emergency Preparedness | greenhouse staff educated on proper composting procedures | greenhouse staff and users educated on proper composting procedures | greenhouse staff & users educated on proper composting procedures and |
| Environmental Awareness | staff are made aware of implications to surface and groundwater from excess runoff of compost material and fertilizers | staff are made aware of implications to surface and groundwater from excess runoff of compost material and fertilizers | staff are made aware of implications to surface and groundwater from excess runoff of compost material and fertilizers |
| Training | all employees are trained in the importance of proper composting procedures | all employees are trained in the importance of proper composting procedures and the prompt removal of full bins | all employees are trained in the importance of proper composting procedures and the prompt removal of full bins |
| Communication | staff communicate proper composting procedures to greenhouse users; managers and staff communicate with CALS Farm Services for full bin removal | staff communicate proper composting procedures to greenhouse users; managers and staff communicate with CALS Farm Services for full bin removal | staff communicate proper composting procedures to greenhouse users; managers and staff communicate with CALS Farm Services for full bin removal |

| Operational Aspects | Environmental Assurance >> | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | Level 1 | Level 2 | Level 3 |
| Management | | | |
| Compost Bin Construction & Design | steel; rust resistant paint; removable swinging door for easy access; elevated from the ground | steel; rust resistant paint; removable swinging door for easy access; elevated from the ground; sturdy easy-to-lift lid or stored under cover | steel; rust resistant paint; removable swinging door for easy access; elevated from the ground; sturdy easy-to-lift lid or stored under cover |
| Signage | bins are posted for no trash and plastic; compost handling procedures centrally posted; trash and compost cans are labeled | bins are posted for no trash and plastic; compost handling procedures posted in several locations in the greenhouse and around bins; trash cans and compost cans are clearly labeled; bins are posted to inform visitors of safety hazards of removing material from compost bins for personal use | bins are posted for no trash and plastic; compost handling procedures posted in several locations in the greenhouse and around bins; trash cans and compost cans are clearly labeled; bins are posted to inform visitors of safety hazards of removing material from compost bins for personal use |
| Ventilation | bins are located outside of greenhouses | bins are located outside of greenhouses away from conference room, break room and classroom windows | bins are located outside of greenhouses away from conference room, break room and classroom windows |
| Handling | | | |
| Procedures | staff and greenhouse users are educated in all aspects of composting procedures | staff and greenhouse users are educated in composting procedures; composting posters are displayed; written compost procedures are given to all new greenhouse users | staff and greenhouse users are educated in composting procedures; composting posters are displayed; written compost procedures are given to all new greenhouse users |
| Safety | | | |
| Prevention of Biological & Chemical Exposures | staff, users and visitors are aware of safety hazards of removing material from compost bins for personal use through training and signage | staff, users and visitors are aware of safety hazards of removing material from compost bins for personal use through training and signage | staff, users and visitors are aware of safety hazards of removing material from compost bins for personal use through training and signage |