

Compost 101: How to use compost

Compost is used to enhance soil by mixing into the soil or as a top dressing. Compost is not a replacement for soil.

Existing Flower Beds

Add about 1/2" of compost as a top dressing. If adding mulch, apply compost first, then cover with mulch. If last year's mulch is still in place, remove it, add a layer of compost, then re-apply the mulch. Water until the entire root zone is saturated.

New Beds

Add 2" of compost and dig into the soil 1 foot deep. Although compost is beneficial whenever it is added to soil, for the best results, add your compost about 4 weeks before planting. This will give the compost some extra time to boost the level of beneficial organisms in your soil, energizing plant growth.

Vegetable Gardens

Apply about 3/4" of compost as a top dressing, either before or after planting. Again, for best results, apply the compost at least 4 weeks before planting. You can also put a bit of compost in the hole you make when you plant your seedlings.

Mulching Around Trees

Blend 1-part compost to 4 parts wood chip mulch. For best results, apply in early spring or fall. Always arrange the mulch so that water flows away from the tree trunk.

Tree Planting

Dig a hole about 5 times the diameter of the root ball of the tree. Before planting, mix 1 part compost and 6 parts original soil and mix thoroughly outside of the hole. Place the tree in the hole and use the compost-soil mixture as backfill around the root ball. Water thoroughly. For best results, apply a compost-wood chip mixture as a mulch around the tree (see above).



Compost use instructions provided by compost.org.

Lab tested, safe to use in your gardens


Green Cart compost is lab-tested Category A compost and meets Compost Quality Alliance (CQA) Product Quality Test Requirements

Category A (CCME, 2005) - Unrestricted - Compost that can be used in any application such as agricultural lands, residential gardens, horticultural operations, the nursery industry & other businesses.

The *Compost Quality Alliance (CQA)* is a voluntary program established by the Compost Council of Canada and the compost producers utilizing standardized testing methodologies and uniform operating protocols to improve customer confidence in compost selection and utilization.



Peak (Green Cart) Compost

Product produced at the Calgary Composting Facility by  Chinook Resource Management Group (11920 68 St SE, Calgary, AB)

Organic matter	Min 40%
Moisture Content	Max 60%

Batch Numbers: 190-193 and 201-209

Weight: 100 L equals approximately 50 kg

Recommendations for product use are only a suggestion based on the analysis that was performed on this material.

Compost should not be ingested by humans or animals. Wash hands after handling product.

Turning food and yard waste into quality compost

Thank you for using your green cart! By composting your food and yard waste, The City of Calgary has been able to reduce garbage by half and produce a nutrient-rich compost for use in our community.

Compost is a soil amendment that helps improve the health of lawns, flower beds and gardens. The compost you are picking up is made up of the food scraps, leaves, branches and yard waste materials you put in the Green Cart composting program.

NOTE: Compost must be used in conjunction with soil – by mixing into the soil or as a top dressing. Compost is not a replacement for soil.

BENEFITS OF COMPOST

- Enhances soil structure
- Use less water due to greater moisture retention
- Improves plant health

Using your green cart the right way

The food and yard waste you put in your green cart has a direct impact on the quality of the compost that is produced. Follow these tips to ensure that we can work together to make the highest quality compost possible:

- Use only certified compostable bags or newspaper lining in your kitchen pail. Do not use plastic bags as they do not breakdown and contaminate the finished compost.
- Remove fruit and vegetable stickers from peels and rinds before composting.
- Put food scraps in, but keep food packaging out. This includes twist ties, elastics, plastic cutlery, straws and plastic food containers.

Did you know?

- Food and yard waste won't break down in the landfill. Thanks for using your green cart.
- Calgarians now recycle and compost more waste at home than is sent to landfill. Great job!
- By composting, you have reduced black cart garbage to landfill by 50%!

For more Green Cart program tips, visit calgary.ca/greencart or contact 311.

