

Managing Organic Waste at Home:
Creating a Sustainable
Scenic Rim

Your handy guide.



**SCAN ME TO
LEARN MORE.**

COMPOSTING AT HOME

Scenic Rim Regional Council is committed to creating a sustainable future for you and your family.

This brochure offers an introduction to composting, worm farming and other ways to manage organic waste at home. Not only will this reduce the waste disposed at landfill but also enable you to make the most of your household organic waste.

What is compost?

Compost is the soil-like material created when plant and vegetable matter breaks down. It can be used as a soil enhancer, potting mix, or mulch in the garden.

Why compost?

Kitchen and garden waste accounts for more than 40 per cent of the contents of the average Scenic Rim general waste bin which ultimately ends up at landfill. This material is a valuable resource that, through composting, can be converted to nutrient-rich humus to improve soil quality.

Putting garden and kitchen scraps in the general waste bin causes problems at landfill sites and wastes valuable organic resources. Composting is a simple process available to everyone, even those without a backyard.

**IT'S EASY TO FIT INTO
YOUR DAILY ROUTINE AND,
BEST OF ALL, IT'S FREE!**



There are several options for composting your kitchen scraps and garden waste at home:

Bin Type



Compost bin

Ideal for those with a backyard. Compost tumbler
Requires regular rotation.



Garden heap

For garden waste only.
Mix grass clippings, dried leaves, and prunings into a heap, turning regularly.



Worm farm

Suitable for smaller spaces, such as balconies or garages.



Fermentation and other organics recycling systems

Bokashi bucket, worm towers, trench composting, no-dig gardening and mulch.

COMPOST

INGREDIENTS

A good compost mix consists of:

✓ **nitrogen** ✓ **carbon** ✓ **air** ✓ **water**

Nitrogen products (Greens)

- ✓ Fruit and vegetable scraps
- ✓ Fresh lawn clippings
- ✓ Tea leaves and coffee grounds
- ✓ Manure from herbivores (eg cows, chickens, ducks)
- ✓ Fresh garden prunings and old flowers



Carbon products (Browns)

- ✓ Dried leaves and grass clippings
- ✓ End-of-season vegetable plants
- ✓ Wood chips
- ✓ Paper towel and cardboard
- ✓ Shredded paper



Avoid these ingredients:

- ✗ Meat scraps, dairy products, oils, or fats
- ✗ Manure from carnivores (cats, dogs)
- ✗ Diseased plants or pesticide-treated plants
- ✗ Plastic, treated timber, or weeds that may regrow



COMPOST

METHOD

- 1 → **Place** a 5-10cm layer of small twigs at the bottom for aeration.
- 2 → **Add** a layer of soil or finished compost to introduce micro-organisms.
- 3 → **Add** alternating layers of carbon (browns) and nitrogen (greens).
- 4 → **Sprinkle** with water to keep the mix damp.
- 5 → **Continue** adding scraps regularly, ensuring a balanced mix.
- 6 → **Turn** materials regularly with a fork and maintain moisture levels.
- 7 → **Compost** is ready when it resembles rich, dark soil.



COMPOST INGREDIENTS

PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Smelly compost?	➔ Add more carbon (browns) and turn the pile regularly.
Slow decomposition?	➔ Add more nitrogen (greens), turn more often, and keep it moist.
Maggots or cockroaches?	➔ Avoid meat, fats, and dairy. Cover food scraps with carbon materials.
Rodents?	➔ Use a fine wire mesh under the bin, avoid grains, and keep the pile damp.



WORM FARMING

Worm farming is a great way to compost kitchen waste, particularly for those with limited space.

ONE WORM FARM CAN CONSUME THE KITCHEN WASTE OF A TWO-TO THREE PERSON HOUSEHOLD.



SETTING UP A WORM FARM

- 1 → **Line** the upper tray with damp cardboard.
- 2 → **Add** a 5 cm layer of bedding (e.g., coir peat, shredded paper, mulch).
- 3 → **Introduce** at least 1000 worms (available online or from other worm farmers and Local hardware stores too).
- 4 → **Place** in a cool, shaded area. Worms prefer dark, moist environments.
- 5 → **Keep** a damp layer of newspaper, hessian, or carpet on top of food waste.



FEEDING YOUR WORMS

- ✓ Feed worms in the upper tray under newspaper.
- ✓ Worms consume half their body weight in food per day.
- ✗ Avoid citrus, onions, garlic, and chilli.
- ✓ The smaller the food scraps, the faster they will be processed.
- ✓ Going on holiday?
Leave harder vegetables like carrots and pumpkin.

Harvesting Worm Castings

- When the upper tray is full of castings (dark, soil-like material), add another tray with fresh food.
- Worms will migrate upwards, leaving castings ready for use.
- Use castings as fertiliser for plants or mix with soil for potting mix.

Using worming liquid

- The liquid collected at the bottom can be diluted (1:10 ratio) and used as a fertiliser every 2-4 weeks



TROUBLESHOOTING WORM FARMING PROBLEMS



PROBLEM	SOLUTION
Smelly farm? →	Reduce food, add worms, stir for aeration, and add shredded paper.
Slow breakdown? →	Cut food smaller, reduce feeding, and adjust for seasonal temperature.
Other insects? →	This is normal; they aid decomposition. Deter ants by placing worm farm legs in water or by applying Vaseline.
Worms dying? →	Ensure moisture balance — add shredded paper if too wet, water if too dry.



OTHER FOOD WASTE RECYCLING METHODS



Bokashi bucket

A fermentation system that requires materials to be buried after processing.



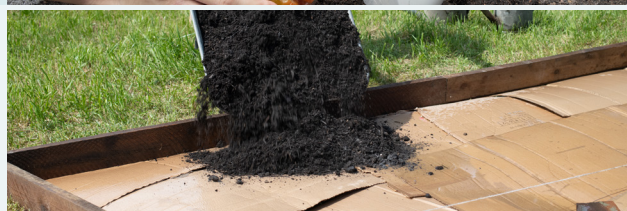
Worm towers

Bury a PVC pipe or bucket in garden beds to allow worms to process scraps directly



No-Dig Gardening

Layer carbon and nitrogen materials directly onto soil for raised garden beds.



Trench Composting

Bury food scraps directly in garden trenches.



Mulching

Place a 10cm layer of garden waste around plant bases to retain moisture and nutrients.



HEALTH AND SAFETY

- ✓ Always wear gloves when handling compost and worm castings.
- ✓ Wash hands thoroughly afterward.
- ✓ Wear a mask when working with compost, especially if you have allergies or have a weakened immune system.
- ✓ Ensure compost stays damp to reduce airborne particles.
- ✓ Avoid pet faeces in compost and prevent rodent infestations.



Creating a

Sustainable future!

Scenic Rim Regional Council is committed to **reducing waste** and **promoting sustainable living**. We offer Scenic Rim Residents a compost bin and wormfarm rebate of up to **\$50** off the purchase of eligible composting equipment to support residents in their composting journey. Find out more at Scenic Rim Regional Council's website or contact Council on **07 5540 5111**.

BY COMPOSTING, YOU'RE NOT ONLY REDUCING WASTE BUT ALSO CREATING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR THE SCENIC RIM!



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