The Compost Education Centre's Programs & Resources

Presentation Offered by Kayla Siefried
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January 23, 2020 City of Victoria Council Meeting

The Compost Education Centre is located on unceded and occupied Coast Salish territories, specifically, the ancestral lands of the Lekwungen speaking peoples, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

Compost Education Centre

The Compost Education Centre's mission is to encourage composting, local food security, waste reduction & diversion, and ecological conservation, through education in Victoria and throughout the CRD

We achieve our mission by offering our extensive, accessible, public education programs that focus on community-based climate change adaptation and resiliency

- School Programs
  - Onsite
  - In Classrooms
- Adult Education Programs
  - Onsite Scheduled
  - Offsite Booked
- Healing City Soils Program
- Attendance at community events, hosting two annual plant sales and a garden party


Model Food Forest
The Compost Education Centre's site is a
large food forest made up of smaller
gardens called guilds. A guild is a
grouping of plants that provide
functions while being as
mutually supportive as possible. The
functions of a guild might include providing
food, beauty, beneficial insect habitat as
well as building and mu
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Compost
Education
Centre
1216 N. Park


The Compost Cycle
12 WAYS OF A HAPPY CLASSROOM
GARBAGE

Compost Education Centre
2020 Workshop Schedule
FREE Workshops! Saturdays
10am-12pm

Composting Basics Feb 1, Mar 7, May 2, June 6, Sept 12, October 3, Nov 7
Worm Composting Mar 21, Sept 19
Advanced Composting Apr 18, Oct 17
Advanced Composting: Sheet Mulching Nov 21
Soil: Really Important Tiny Lives Apr 25, Sept 26
Composting for Small Spaces Apr 4

SPECIAL EVENTS
Spring Organic Plant Sale Saturday May 9, 10am-2pm
Annual General Meeting & Garden Party Fundraiser Saturday June 13th, 11-3:30
August Organic Plant Sale Saturday August 8, 10am-1pm

2020 Paid Workshop Schedule
Register online: www.compost.bc.ca

Jan 25	Winter Pruning
Feb 1	Advanced Fruit Tree Pruning Techniques
Feb 8	Planning Your Year-Round Veggie Garden
Feb 8	Composting Toilet Systems
Feb 22	Rainwater Resilience
Feb 29	Boulevard Blooms and Street Greens
Feb 29	Greenhouse Growing: Cloches, Hoop Houses, and Cold Frames
Mar 7	Spring Planting: From Seed to Seedling
Mar 14	Gardening for Garry Oak Ecosystems
Mar 28	Grow Your Own Food 101
Mar 28	Soil Amendments: What and When?
April 4	Making Herbal Tinctures
April 18	Regenerative Agriculture for the Home Garden
Apr 25	Garden Pests and Disease: Organic Solutions
May 2	Creating an Herbal First Aid Kit

2020 Paid Workshop Schedule
Register online: www.compost.bc.ca

May 23	Indigenous Plant Walk
May 30	Home Scale Solar Systems
June 6	Late Spring Edibles in ***W̱SÁNEĆ*** Territory
June 20	Native Bee Care
Aug 29	Summer Pruning
Sept 12	Herbs for Winter Wellness
Sept 19	Hot Water Bath Canning
Sept 26	Pressure Canning
Oct 3	Food Preservation Zine Making & Canning Swap
Oct 17	Fermented Hot Sauce and Salsas
Oct 24	Perennial Vegetables
Oct 31	Grow Your Own Mushrooms
Nov 7	Advanced Mushroom Growing Techniques
Nov 14	Fermenting Vegetables
Nov 21	Plant Propagation

Note: Our Saturday paid workshop times & prices vary. Please check our Eventbrite page, website or social media listings for workshop details.

We achieve our mission by maintaining our demonstration site for the public to observe and experience. The site includes:

- A wide variety of composting systems
- Organic vegetable and fruit growing
- Permaculture practices in action (model food forest, guilds, no till agriculture)
- Rainwater harvesting and storage
- Solar power & aquaponics systems
- Greenhouse and cold frame growing
- And a strawbale learning classroom

Organic Vegetable Gardens

These gardens demonstrate how to grow annual produce in several ways. They are organic gardens in which no chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or genetically modified seeds are used. The small space is maximized through intensive planting of a diverse array of crops which are often interplanted as companions.

Leaf mulch, straw and cover crops protect the soil in these beds over the winter, limiting compaction from heavy rains and nutrient loss due to run-off. Mulch also helps to keep moisture in the soil and prevent weeds during the growing season.

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Maison
Des
Maison
Edible Perennial Polyculture Garden
e Food Forest
different layers in this model food forest?
Vine
Makes efficient use of vertical growing space by climbing up tree layer
Shrub
Makes use of space and light above herbaceous layer. Keeps herbaceous plants from getting too aggressive.
Ground cover
Competes with weeds, provides medicine.
Root
Takes advantage of underground growing space.
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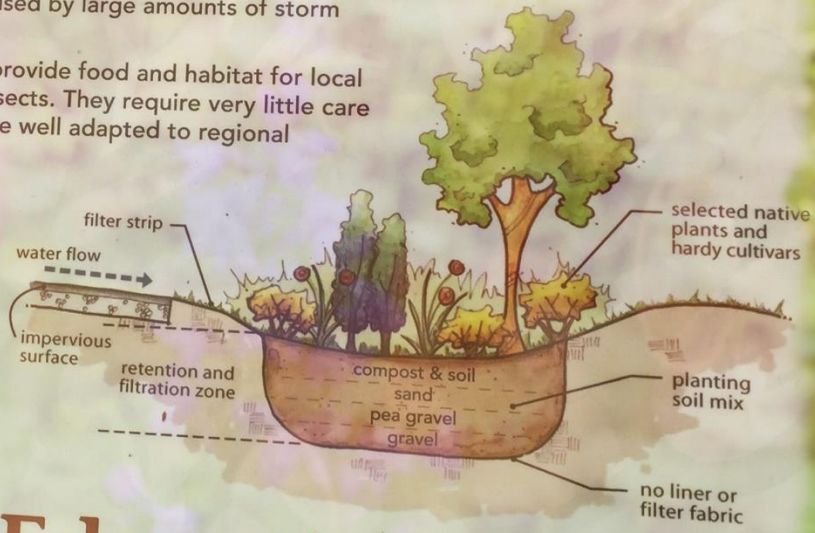
Native Plant Rain Garden

A rain garden is designed to capture and filter rainwater that flows off hard, impervious surfaces such as roadways and rooftops. The garden is dug down a meter and filled with layers of increasingly fine gravel, pea gravel, sand and finally soil and compost. The plants growing on top absorb storm water run-off and filter out any pollutants it may carry. In this way, the rain garden mimics natural processes to recharge aquifers and reduce flooding caused by large amounts of storm water runoff.

The native plants in this garden provide food and habitat for local species of birds and beneficial insects. They require very little care once established because they are well adapted to regional climate conditions. This garden also provides an opportunity to learn about First Nations uses of these plants.

As you can see, this garden combines the power of two great design strategies. It works to "slow, spread and sink" rainwater while providing much-needed habitat for native species.



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Composting Essentials
Compost Education Centre

We achieve our mission by having

- Knowledgeable and trained staff available to the public
- A demonstration site that features an office and retail/resource library open 4 days a week all year long
- 20+ free educational factsheets available online and onsite
- Staff who respond to email, phone, social media and walk in queries
- Retail sales of compost bins, compost accessories, and local organic garden seeds
- Staff that attend approximately 30 community events per year


KITCHEN CATCHER
(SMALL)
$18.95
KITCHEN CATCHER
(MEDIUM)
$16.00
KITCHEN CATCHER
(LARGE)
$21.95
WINGDIGGER
$17.00
wingdigger
wingdigger


Cukes
Peas
Beans
Brassicas
Greens
Beets
Flowers

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Factsheet Series #8

Compost Ecology

Composting is a biochemical process, meaning that decomposition takes place as a result of biological life breaking chemical bonds. Microscopic organisms such as bacteria, actinomycetes and fungi chemically break down organic material via enzymes that they secrete. The decomposition process is finished by physical digestion

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Factsheet Series #7

Mulching

Mulching is the process of adding a layer of material to the surface of your garden soil. Whether you grow fruits and vegetables, flowers or perennial ornamentals, mulching is an important way of protecting and improving your soil. Without mulch, the soil surface is vulnerable to erosion, dehydration, loss of structure and

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Fact Sheet Series #6

Urban Leaves

Leaves are truly one of the urban gardener's greatest resources. According to *The Radale Book of Composting*: "...the leaves of most trees contain twice the mineral content of manure." This is because the extensive root system of trees allows them to draw minerals from deep in the soil. They are also high in fibre which "aids in improving the aeration and crumb structure of most soils." In the Greater Victoria Area, leaves, along with other yard and garden waste, cannot be put out with the garbage, and in many municipalities leaf burning is prohibited. However, leaves have many uses for the home gardener and when used properly can greatly improve a garden's soil. Leaves can be used for composting, mulch, lasagna gardening/sheet mulching, potting soil, soil building, worm bedding, and chicken coop bedding. In most cities leaves are plentiful in the autumn and can easily be collected from yards, parks, and streets.

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Factsheet Series #5

Trench Composting

Trench composting, or trenching, is a way of composting by burying food scraps directly in the garden. This method of composting is effective for materials that attract rodents such as meat, dairy, breads and cooked foods. It is also a safe way to compost pet waste. Trenching is a great way of depositing nutrients into your soil at the exact place where plants need it – at their root zones.

Effort Scale:

Easy	1	2	3	4	5	Hard

Involves some deep digging and a system for remembering where you buried your scraps.

Trenching is the act of burying your organic waste directly into your garden soil. The advantage of this method over conventional composting is that it enables you to compost meat, grains, dairy and cooked foods in addition to other kitchen scraps. Because these items attract rodents and flies, we recommend that you don't put them into your regular compost. By burying them in a trench you can avoid these problems, since rodents should not be able to access the material if it is covered by at least 30-45 cm (12-18") of soil. All you need is a shovel!

Trenching is also a safe method for composting pet

3. Protect the soil with a layer of organic mulch material (i.e. leaves or straw). Alternatively, you can also sow a cover crop to protect the soil from the elements and suppress weeds in the time it takes for the trenched materials to decompose.

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Factsheet Series #4

Hot Composting

Hot composting is a process of rapid decomposition the takes place at high temperatures. This decomposition is performed mostly by bacteria adapted to working at high temperatures in order to break down organic materials quickly and efficiently. Hot composting allows for faster production of larger amounts of compost -

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Factsheet Series #3

Backyard Food Waste Digester

Food waste digesters are the easiest way to compost any type of kitchen scraps, including hard to manage kitchen waste like meat, breads, dairy and processed foods. Since these food scraps often attract rodents, the enclosed, half-buried digester acts as a deterrent, keeping rodents out of your compost and away from your home.

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Factsheet Series #2

Vermicomposting

Vermicomposting, or worm composting is an easy process that requires only a few simple components: some red wriggler worms, a ventilated bin, bedding for the worms to live in, food for the worms, and some time to harvest their nutrient rich castings. Once you have all the components in place, worm composting is easy! Ver-

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Factsheet Series #1

Backyard Composting

Composting is a natural, biochemical process which results in the decomposition of organic matter into a nutrient-rich, soil-like product. This process is facilitated by bacteria, fungi, worms, and many other microorganisms. Decomposition is nature's way of recycling plants, animals and other organisms back into the soil that supported them when they were alive. When we compost our food scraps and garden trimmings, we are mimicking this natural decomposition process. The finished compost can then be used to improve the quality of our garden soil. Another major benefit of backyard composting is the diversion of compostable materials from the landfill, where they decompose in an environment without air and release greenhouse gases.

Effort Scale:

Easy	1	2	3	4	5	Hard

Involves weekly maintenance (aeration) and monitoring (for moisture content). Your compost needs to be harvested one to two times each year.

Can I Compost?

be composted but some backyard bins

To keep your compost bin secure from rodents and other small animals, make sure it has the following:

- A secure lid
- A bottom or baseplate (ideally with small holes to
- contact with the soil ecosystem while keep-

Some Numbers:

- In 2019 we taught 217 school workshops to 5637 students and their teachers; **90** of these were in Victoria, more then any other municipality
- In 2019 we taught **89** workshops to adults reaching 1737 participants; **47** of these were hosted at the demonstration site in Fernwood
- In 2019, social media platforms & website received approx 450 000 unique interactions, and we responded to approx 6500 email queries
- 10 active volunteers, and 270 members in good standing
- In 2019 approximately 1250 people visited our demonstration site, not including those attending educational programs

Why am I telling you all this?

- We are soon to be operational on city lands, and wish for council and residents to better understand the range of services, programs and resources the Compost Education Centre has to offer
- Demand for our services and resources continues to grow and we require support in meeting the thirst for education and practical skill building on topics of climate resiliency, soil health, ecological conservation, waste diversion, waste reduction and local food security