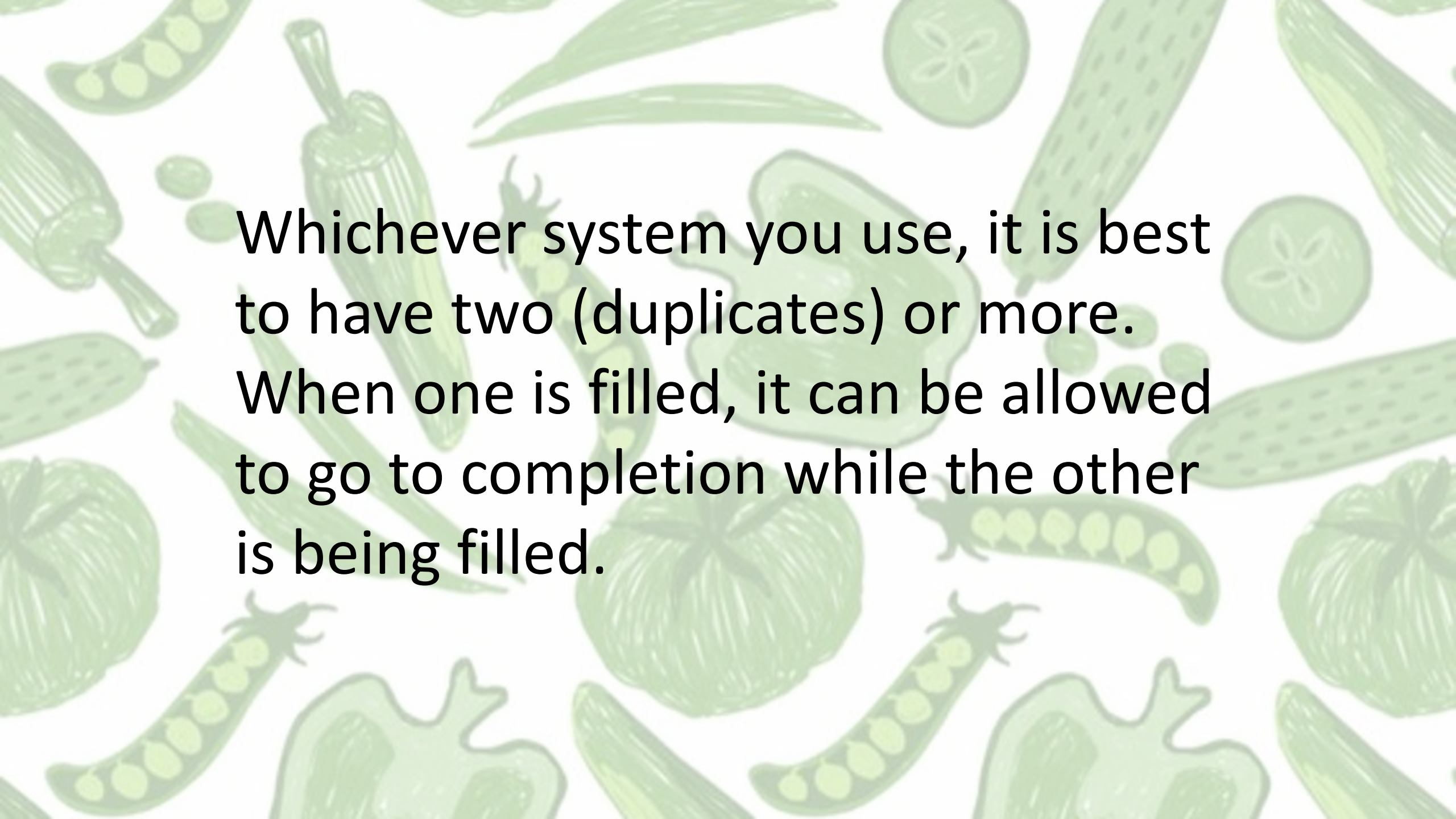


# Module 07: Composting Systems

LSU AgCenter Home Composting Certificate Course

Dr. Joe Willis, Anna Timmerman & Chris Dunaway





Whichever system you use, it is best to have two (duplicates) or more. When one is filled, it can be allowed to go to completion while the other is being filled.



# Compost Mound or Pile

## Simplest

- Yard wastes can be composted without a bin if you don't mind the appearance of an uncontained compost mound in your yard.
- The only costs are your time and energy.
- Tools needed: Shovel or pitchfork. Gloves
- Using a tarp to cover the pile improves it.



Minimum 3' x 3' x 3'



# Garbage Can Composter

## What You Need:

- Materials
  - garbage can with cover
- Tools
  - drill
  - pitchfork or shovel
  - work gloves

Any shape garbage can but a round garbage can is easy to roll for mixing.

Elevate Can



Drill  $\frac{1}{2}$ " holes every 4-6", sides AND bottom. NOT lid!



# Wire Mesh Bin Composter

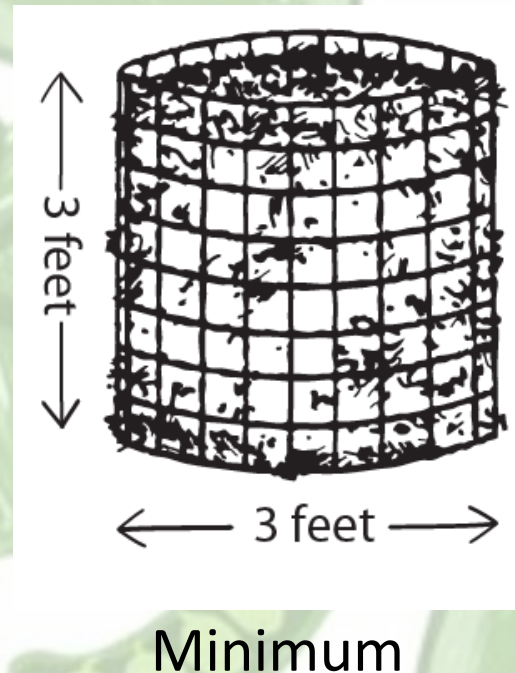
## Materials

- 10 1/2 feet of 36-inch-wide 1-inch mesh galvanized chicken wire or 1/2-inch mesh hardware cloth ( $2\pi r = \text{circumference}$ ).
- Non-galvanized will not last very long
- heavy wire for ties
- 3 or 4 wooden or metal posts (for chicken wire bin) 4 feet tall

## Tools

- heavy-duty wire or tin snips
- pliers
- hammer (for chicken wire bin)
- metal file (for hardware cloth bin)
- work gloves

Turn pile by lifting and then refilling.



Heavy wire mesh screen is sturdier than chicken wire.



# Variations on a Theme





# Wooden Box Bin

- Materials
  - 4 wooden pallets (5 if you want a bottom in the container), sized to make a four-sided container at least 3 feet x 3 feet x 3 feet
  - nails
  - wire ties
- OR
  - One 12-foot length of 2 x 4 lumber
  - Five 12-foot lengths of lumber, 6" x 3/4"
  - nails
- Tools
  - saw
  - sledgehammer
  - work gloves
  - pitchfork/shovel



Minimum 3' x 3' x 3'





# Cinder Block Bin

A cinder block bin is sturdy, durable and easily accessible.

- Materials
  - about 46 cinder blocks for the first bin
  - optional: about 32 blocks for a second bin
- Tools
  - work gloves
  - pitchfork/shovel





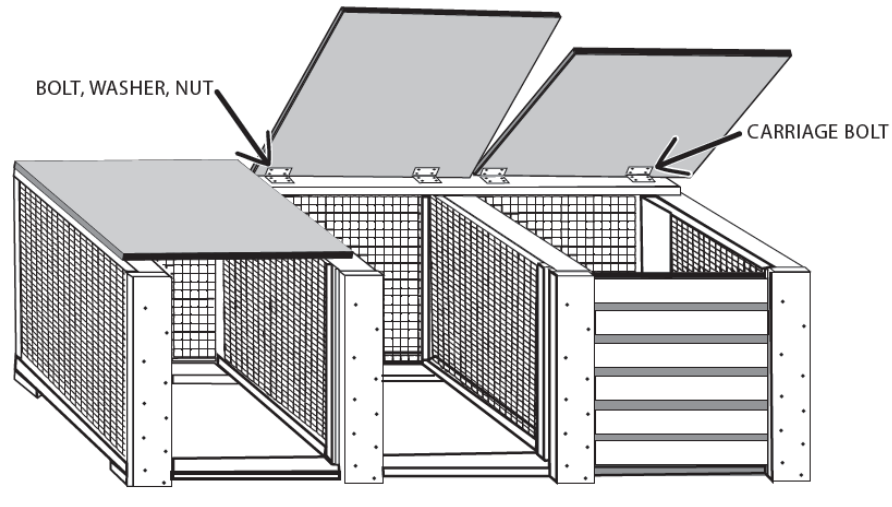
# Wood & Wire Three Bin Turning Unit

## Materials

- four 12-foot (or eight 6-foot) lengths of pressure-treated 2 x 4 lumber
- two 2-foot lengths of pressure-treated 2 x 4 lumber
- one 16-foot length of 2 x 6 lumber
- six 8-foot lengths of 1 x 6 lumber
- one 4- x 8-foot sheet of 1/2-inch exterior plywood
- 22 feet of 36-inch-wide 1/2-inch hardware cloth
- 2 pounds of 16d galvanized nails
- 250 poultry wire staples (or a power stapler with 1-inch galvanized staples)
- 12 1/2-inch carriage bolts 4 inches long
- 12 washers and 12 nuts for the bolts
- six 3-inch zinc-plated hinges
- 24 washers and 24 nuts for the hinges
- 1 quart wood preservative or stain

## Tools

- tape measure
- handsaw or circular power saw
- hammer
- tin snips
- carpenter's square
- optional: power stapler with 1-inch galvanized staples
- drill with 1/2-inch bit
- screwdriver
- 3/4-inch socket or open-ended wrench
- pencil
- safety glasses
- ear protection
- dust mask
- work gloves



More Expensive and More  
Complicated to Construct  
BUT Durable and Attractive





# Rotating Compost Bins

Primary purpose is to make turning easier





# Why Cover Your Compost Unit

- To protect from rain
  - Excess moisture
  - Leaching of nutrients
- As insulation to hold in heat
- Help keep out pests
- Keep down odors if something is out of kilter





Please post all your questions and results to the message board .

