A picture containing food, plate, drawing

Description automatically generatedLSU AgCenter Home Gardening Certificate Course

Home Lab Activity **# 7**

Activity Title: **Compostable Material – Wow!**

**Materials Needed:**

Leakproof 5 gallon or larger container

Large clean garbage bag or garbage can

**Instructions:**

1. The purpose of this lab is to get us to realize how much of the trash that we dispose of on a regular basis is actually material that could go into a compost pile or bin to make rich compost for our soil. Compost improves our soil structure, increases soil water holding capacity and CEC and provides nutrients for our plants.
2. Look at the accompanying list to give you an idea of what is good material for a compost pile and what is not. Use this list to help you decide if stuff you’re planning to throw away should or should not go into a compost pile.
3. For a period of at least 3 consecutive days, save all the waste material from your day to day activities that is compostable.
4. Weigh the empty container and record that weight. Place the moist or wet materials such as vegetable trimmings or vegetable leftovers into the leakproof bucket.
5. Weigh the empty container and record that weight. Place the dry material such as newspaper, junk mail and pasteboard boxes into the large plastic bag or clean garbage can.
6. At the start of the experiment, put a new clean garbage bag in your kitchen garbage can. Anything that doesn’t go into one of your compostable piles should go into this garbage can.
7. At the end of three days, determine the volume or weight of the wet material and the volume or weight of the dry material. Estimate the amount of material that is in your kitchen garbage can – the material that does need to go to a landfill.
8. Multiple those numbers by 120 and that is approximately how much of your personal “trash” could be going to compost annually instead of to a landfill.

**Results:**

Record your numbers as:

1. Wet compostable material
2. Dry compostable material
3. Actual trash for the landfill

**Reminder to post a photo to discussion board link:** [https://www.facebook.com/groups/538153443545779/](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fgroups%2F538153443545779%2F&data=02%7C01%7CJWillis%40agcenter.lsu.edu%7C1fa7b9799bb84b8c5bca08d812c8d704%7C804b509899084bdf9c06b3df777563aa%7C0%7C0%7C637280001091919306&sdata=JsQNm5K3rh81uLoONJ%2FOJfxBxCEGEmJXtfMIdw731Sw%3D&reserved=0)

**Browns for the Compost Pile**

*Brown materials for composting includes dry or woody plant material. In most cases, these materials are brown, or naturally turn brown:*

Fall leaves

Pine needles

Twigs, chipped tree branches/bark

Straw or hay

Sawdust

Corn stalks

Paper (newspaper, writing/printing paper, paper plates and napkins, coffee filters)

Dryer lint

Cotton fabric

Corrugated cardboard (without any waxy/slick paper coatings

**Greens for the Compost Pile**

*Green materials for composting consist mostly of wet or recently growing materials. Green materials are usually green or come from plants that were green at some point but not always.*

Grass clippings

Coffee grounds/tea bags

Vegetable and fruit scraps

Trimmings from perennial and annual plants

Annual weeds that haven't set seed

Eggshells

Animal manures (cow, horse, sheep, chicken, rabbit, etc. No dog or cat manure.)

Seaweed