

# Awkward Thumbs



A Guide to help you  
start your own home  
garden

## Composting





## Companion Booklet



In 2014, we created a programme, Awkward Thumbs, to assist the budding but not so green "thumbed" garden enthusiast.

We are sure, these tips will come in handy especially now as we strive to be more self-sufficient during this COVID-19 Pandemic.

Then hosts, Aisha Reid and Jamal Hall, learned how to create compost for the garden and reduce waste to the landfill.

Resource person: Albert Farnum of the Ministry of Agriculture.



# Composting



Aisha Reid and Extension Officer with the Ministry of Agriculture, Albert Farnum discuss the importance of composting and how to use everyday household waste to build compost for a backyard garden.



# Composting



Compost is organic matter that is broken down. It is used as fertiliser.

It requires making a heap of wetted "green" food waste into humus (soil) after a period of weeks or months.



# Composting

Here, Albert shows Aisha the various ingredients which can be used to make compost, including leaves, fruit and vegetable skins (peelings), even eggs shells.



Albert, however, warned against using meats or fat, since this could bring rodents, insects and other unwanted pests to your home.







Composting has several benefits, including improving soil structure, providing added nourishment to crops and making sure the soil can store moisture for longer periods.





Place the waste into a drum, bin or container.

It should be properly drained, too much moisture causes the compost to be soggy. This stops it from breaking down properly.





Drilling holes into the container allows air to pass through. This is important for composting.

You should water the compost on a regular basis to keep the dampness level between 30 and 60 percent.

To test for moisture, squeeze the compost; it should be damp but not dripping.



# Composting



A composter holds your compost. It can be a plastic container or bucket, a box, a drum, a barrel or tumbler.

You may be tempted to use a large container ,however, a small one is better.

A larger container with more compost will take longer to break down.





Compost should be a mixture of green and dry. The dry material will promote micro activity very quickly, while the green will help to create heat and produce nitrogen for micro organisms to feed on.

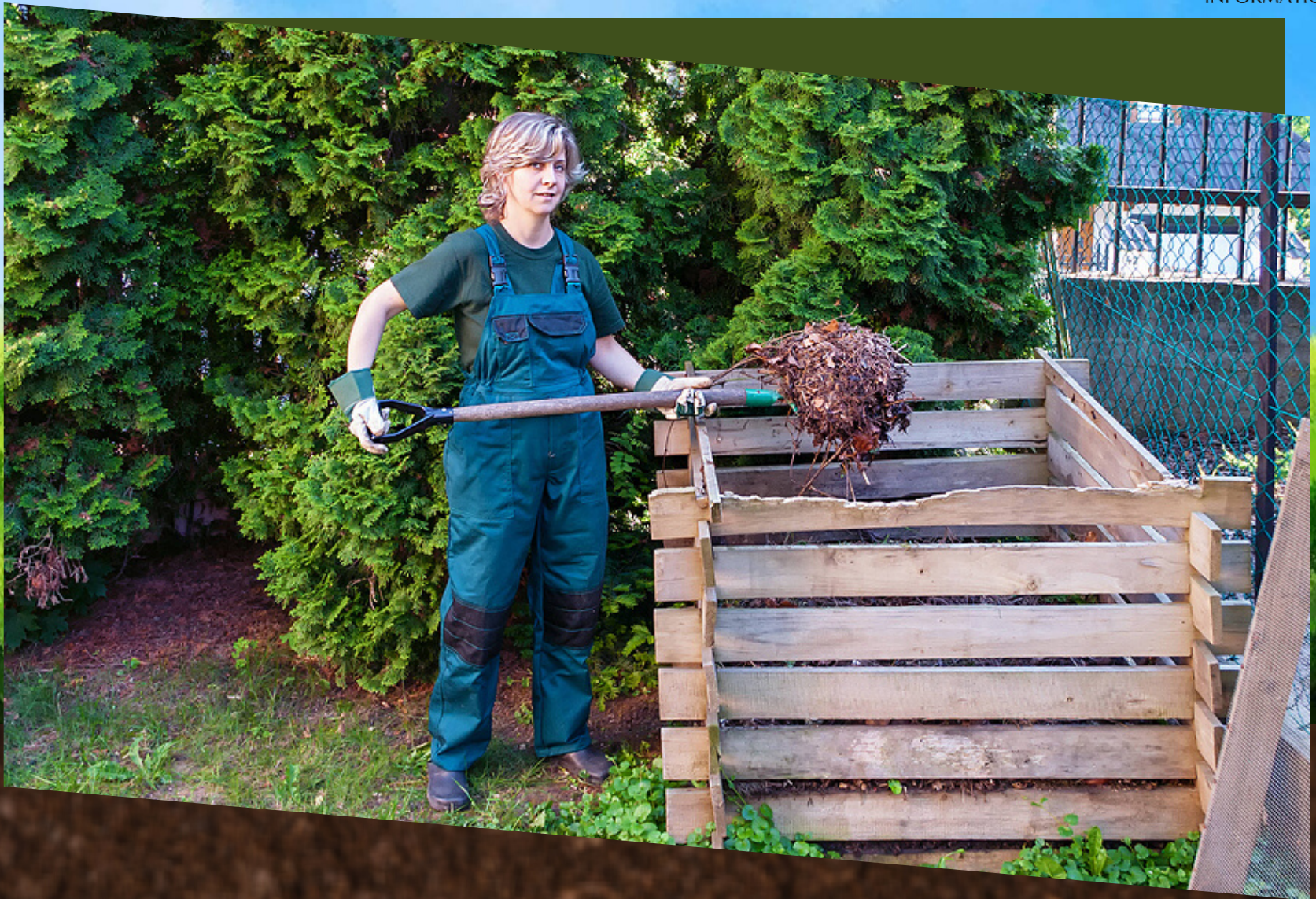
Adding earthworms or organic material, for example manure, helps to speed up the 'composting' process.

The compost should also be placed in a cool area and covered, so as not to attract pests.





# Composting



Compost should be stirred on a regular basis. This helps move air throughout the compost.

This is important because during the 'break down' process, heat is generated. This makes the top layer dry out quicker than the bottom.



# 12

# Composting



1



2



3

When the compost is ready, using it is as easy as 1-2-3. Remember, we're changing awkward thumbs into **GREEN** thumbs!



# 13 Awkward Thumbs

## Acknowledgements



Written by: André Skeete  
Designed by: André Skeete & Esther Jones

Special thanks to Extension Officer with the Ministry of  
Agriculture, Albert Farnum (Ret.)