



## WASTE REDUCTION & COMPOSTING

### WHY COMPOSTING YARD & KITCHEN WASTE HELPS

Pennsylvania's goal is to recycle 35% of municipal waste – composting helps!

#### FAST FACTS

- ✓ The National Composting Council estimates the average U.S. household generates 650 pounds of compostables every year.
- ✓ Limited landfill space should be reserved for materials that cannot be recycled or composted.
- ✓ Garbage handling is the fourth-largest expense for many cities. Composting can help reduce these costs.
- ✓ 34% of landfilled waste in Pennsylvania is food and another 30% is paper.

### BENEFITS OF COMPOSTING

#### **PROMOTES SOIL HEALTH**

Compost supplies organic matter to soil, which attracts earthworms and stimulates beneficial soil microorganisms. Compost also performs the following:

- ✓ Increases soil water holding capacity
- ✓ Increases soil nutrient retention
- ✓ Improves soil tilth and friability
- ✓ Improves soil drainage
- ✓ Loosens heavy clay soils
- ✓ Suppresses soil-borne plant pathogens (diseases)

#### **PLANT NUTRIENTS**

Although compost is not a fertilizer, it does contain many trace nutrients that are essential for plant growth. Nitrogen and phosphorus, mostly in organic forms, are released slowly to plants and not readily leached from topsoil.