



Office of Cannabis  
Management

# CANNABIS COMPOSTING 101

SUPPORTING RESOURCE EFFICIENCY  
FOR NEW YORK STATE CANNABIS PRODUCTION

MARCH 11, 2026

# OVERVIEW

- Welcome/Introductions/Housekeeping
- Review of OCM composting regulations
- Review of DEC composting regulations
- Composting 101
  - What is composting
  - Why composting cannabis waste is beneficial
  - Cannabis composting methodologies
  - How compost can be used/applied
  - Cannabis composting troubleshooting
- Additional resources
- Q&A

# CHAT AND Q&A HOUSEKEEPING

- When using Chat and Q&A functions:
  - Please keep questions and comments focused on composting-related topics
  - Please maintain decorum and respect towards our panelists and each other
- Post-webinar survey
  - Rating and feedback specific to today's webinar
  - Space to request future education topics, other comments
- Other questions for OCM?
  - Sustainability inquiries
    - [PowerScore@ocm.ny.gov](mailto:PowerScore@ocm.ny.gov)
  - General inquiries
    - [info@ocm.ny.gov](mailto:info@ocm.ny.gov)
    - 1-888-OCM-5151

# OCM COMPOSTING REQUIREMENTS

# POWERSCORE REPORTING

- PowerScore resource tracking required for all licensees authorized to cultivate cannabis in NYS
  - Energy, water, waste, emissions
- First year's results, as of Aug. 31, 2025:
  - 74% composting all cannabis waste
- Reminder!
  - 2025-26 PowerScore annual reporting due **Aug. 31, 2026**
  - OCM Sustainability webpage: **[cannabis.ny.gov/sustainability](https://cannabis.ny.gov/sustainability)**



To access PowerScore, scan QR code or visit [cannabispowerscore.org/new-york](https://cannabispowerscore.org/new-york)

# OCM COMPOSTING REGULATIONS

- OCM cannabis waste composting requirements
  - Adult-use regulations: Section 125.11
    - Composting regulations: Sections 125.11(c), 125.11(d), 125.11(h), 125.11(i) and 125.11(k)
    - Record-keeping regulations for waste disposal: 125.11(e), 125.11(j)
    - Transportation of cannabis waste: 125.11(f)
    - Storage of cannabis waste: 125.11(h), 125.11(i)
  - Medical regulations: Section 113.25
    - Sections 113.25(a) through 113.25(e)
- Nutshell version:
  - Once rendered, non-contaminated cannabis waste can be composted on- or off-premises, and may be reintroduced back into the agricultural operation

# WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?

Type of Cannabis Waste	Can it be Composted?*
Non-contaminated stalks, stems, fan leaves, root balls and soil media	Yes
Non-contaminated flower, flower products, compostable cannabis-infused products and plant material containing THC	Yes, after 50% rendering
Post-extraction residuals (contaminated with solvents)	No**

\*Note: Tier 4 and 5 cultivators, and ROs generating > 0.5 tons cannabis waste per week, that operate within 25 miles of an organic recycling facility shall not landfill or combust non-contaminated cannabis waste but instead shall compost on- or off-premises, use an anaerobic digester, or use the waste as an input to another product.

\*\*Solvents (e.g. butane, ethanol, etc.) or other materials used for extraction processes may be considered a hazardous waste. Contact DEC for information about hazardous waste management for businesses at [info.SQG@dec.ny.gov](mailto:info.SQG@dec.ny.gov).

# DEC COMPOSTING REGULATIONS

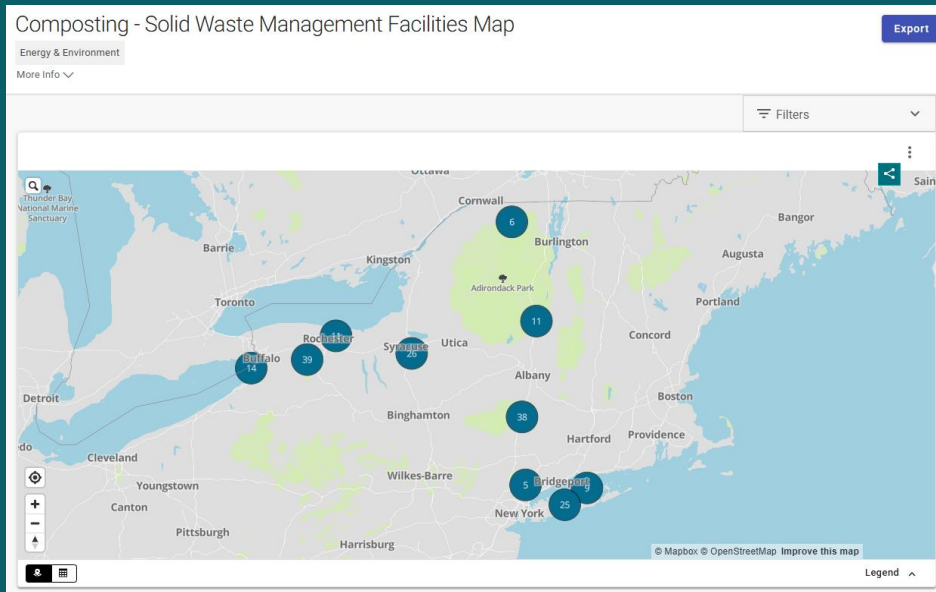
# COMPOSTING CANNABIS

- Organics recycling (composting, AD, etc) regulated by type and quantity of material being processed
  - Cannabis plant waste (commercial) - source separated organic waste
  - Cannabis plant waste (agricultural/grower) - exempt
- Composting Operations (Municipal, private, non-profit)
  - Exempt (on-site processing)
  - Exempt (agricultural waste inputs)
  - Registration to process source separated organic waste ~50 facilities
  - Permit to process source separated organic waste ~10 facilities

# SENDING MATERIAL FOR RECYCLING

- Follow OCM regulations
  - Does Not Need to Be Rendered Unusable - Stalks, stems, fan leaves, root balls, and other soil media
  - Needs to be Rendered Unusable - Any other cannabis waste not listed above, grind and mix the cannabis plant waste with other ground materials so the resulting mixture is at least 50% non-cannabis waste by weight.
    - Mix with other non-contaminated organic waste (food scraps, yard trimmings, manure, etc.) that the receiving organics recycler accepts
- Communicate with your Organics Recycler!

# COMPOST FACILITY MAP RESOURCES



- Open Data Composting Facility Map (DEC regulated composting facilities)
- NYSP21 Organics Resource Locator
- NYCORE/CWMI NYS Compost Facilities Map

# CANNABIS COMPOSTING 101

# MAKING CANNABIS WASTE IRRETRIEVABLE



- Contracting with a waste hauler-municipal or private composting- legal?
- Composting on farm
- Korean natural farming
- Bokashi-Fermenting cannabis waste
- Biochar-collection
- Managing hazardous waste- bioaccumulation
- Managing packaging waste
- Closed loop waste management



Scan QR code to complete the **Composting 101 Webinar Survey**.





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Funded in part by New York State  
Department of Environmental Conservation

# Compost Use for Improved Soil

## Make it and Use it: Urban Environments

**Earth Matter:**  
Make it Turned windrow  
Use it Vegetable production



**LESEC:**  
Make it In-vessel (hot-phase): alternating layers food waste and sawdust.

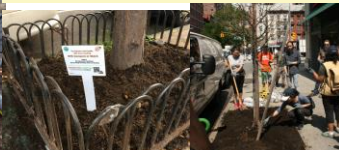


Turn out to windrows: red wiggler worms finish the job



**Use it**  
Street tree planting

Photos courtesy of NYC Compost Project funded by LESEC



**Earth Matter:**  
Make it 2-yard bin; passively aerated

**Fresh Kills:**  
Make it Turned windrow  
Use it Top dressing for landscape beds at golf course (left)  
Amend on-site soils for turf establishment (below)  
Photos courtesy of WeCare Compost



**Use it** Vegetable gardening



**NYC Compost Project hosted by NY Botanical Garden:**  
Make it Compost curing area  
Use it Street tree planting



**St. John's University: Make it**  
In vessel composting, compost tea brewer



**Use it**  
Apply tea to soils of tree roots and shrub planting beds in late April and September



**Earth Matter: Make it**  
3-bin system; passively aerated



**Use it** On-site beautification



**Red Hook Community Farm:**  
Make it Compost windrows created and maintained entirely by solar, wind, and human power  
Use it Community Farm



To view the NYS Compost Facilities Map, visit: [compost.css.cornell.edu/maps.html](http://compost.css.cornell.edu/maps.html)



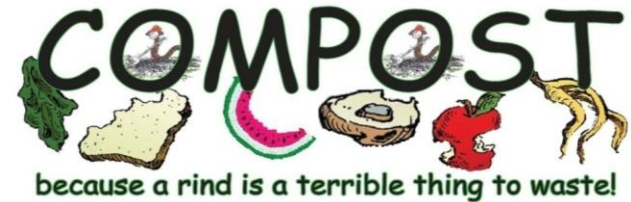


# WHY COMPOST?

- **Composting Reduces Volume by 50%**
- **Recycles nutrients and organic material to build soil**



- It does not burn well
- Fills up Landfills
- Convert organics into a soil like product
- Holds soil moisture during dry seasons
- Helps to Suppress Plant Disease
- Improves soil quality
- Compost = Healthy Soil =  
GoodFood = Healthy People**



# THINK ABOUT RESIDUALS AVAILABLE TO COMPOST

Food waste

Food processing

Leaf and yard waste

Garden residuals

Manure

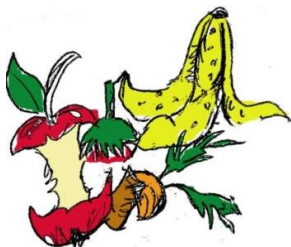
Weeds/lake weeds

Nut Hulls

Biosolids

Silage/Haylage

Mortality



# PREPARE A BASE





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Milk Waste- Icecream- 150,000 gallons/  
100-foot leaf & yard waste  
Windrow/week



# BOKASHI



# PREPARING FEEDSTOCK



# MODIFIED KOREAN PROCESS





## Layer Carbon & Nitrogen

3 Carbon: 1 Nitrogen





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**Stack medium in a windrow**  
Don't double handle.





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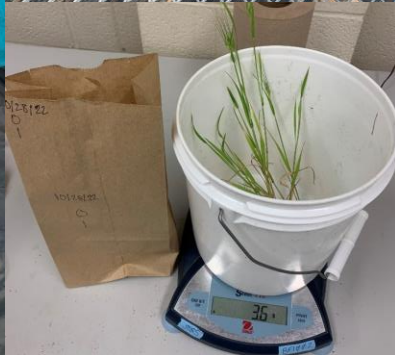
**Steaming windrow**



Week 1



Week 10



**Cornell Waste Management Institute**  
cwmi.css.cornell.edu

# WHAT CANNABIS COMPOSTING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT?

- OCM adult-use composting regulations and compliance
- OCM adult-use waste management regulations and compliance
- Cannabis composting on-site
- Working with an off-site composting facility or farm
- On-site anaerobic digestion
- Working with an off-site anaerobic digester
- Bokashi



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# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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- Cornell University Waste Management Institute/NY-CORE
  - CWMI webpage: <https://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/>
  - Cornell Composting: <https://compost.css.cornell.edu/>
- Department of Environmental Conservation
  - Composting – Solid Waste Management Facilities Map:
    - <https://data.ny.gov/Energy-Environment/Composting-Solid-Waste-Management-Facilities-Map/y4ic-kfv6>

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Apr. 8, 2026 @ 4:20 PM: Water Circularity in Cannabis webinar
  - <https://meetny.gov/webex.com/webex/register/rf367fb98fa71414d6e9c4b97888e37ac>
- Office of Cannabis Management Sustainability webpage
  - <https://cannabis.ny.gov/sustainability>
- Office of Cannabis Management YouTube page
  - [https://www.youtube.com/@NYS\\_Cannabis](https://www.youtube.com/@NYS_Cannabis)
- New York State PowerScore platform
  - <https://cannabispowerscore.org/new-york/>

# QUESTIONS?



# Office of Cannabis Management