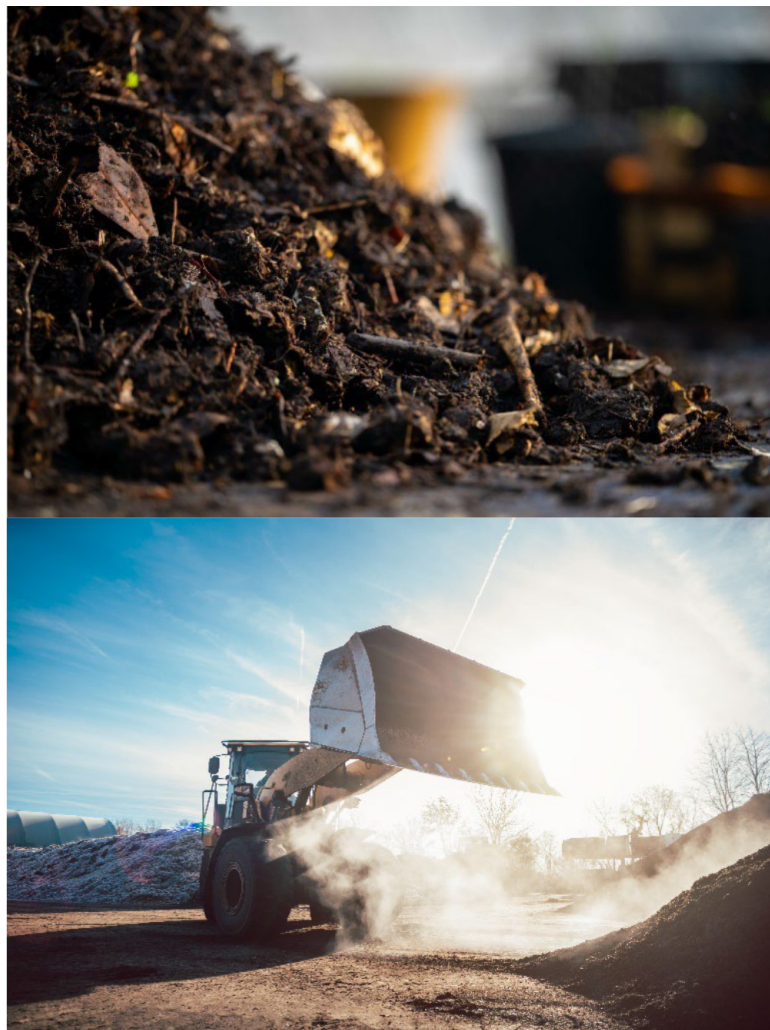


Practical 1:

Composting Parameters and Plant Tolerance Test



Environmental Chemistry and Biology HS2024

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Contents

1	Composting parameters and plant tolerance test	3
1.1	Introduction	3
1.2	Materials and methods	3
1.3	Results	3
1.4	Discussion	3
1.4.1	Results discussion	3
1.4.2	Questions	3
1.5	Conclusion	3
1.6	References	3

1 Composting parameters and plant tolerance test

1.1 Introduction

Briefly describe the purpose of the experiment.

1.2 Materials and methods

Detail the materials used and the step-by-step procedure followed in the experiment.

1.3 Results

Present the data collected in tabular form and include any relevant calculations.

1.4 Discussion

Interpret the results, discussing and answering the questions.

1.4.1 Results discussion

1.4.2 Questions

1. What is the difference between raw unit weight and bulk density? Discuss your results based on the laboratory experiment.

R:

Raw unit weight measures the mass of fresh compost per volume, while bulk density includes porosity and moisture. Bulk density is essential for assessing aeration and microbial activity, impacting compost structure and decomposition efficiency.

2. How can the pH affect the compost?

R:

pH affects microbial activity in composting. Optimal pH (6-8) enhances microbial efficiency, while extreme pH values (near 1 or 14) slow down decomposition and affect nutrient availability.

3. What is the impact of immature compost on plant growth, and how can this be assessed in the lab?

R:

Immature compost harms plant growth due to high microbial activity, which depletes oxygen and releases toxic substances. In the lab, plant tolerance tests measure the compost's effect on germination and growth.

4. How do you calculate the bulk density of compost, and why is this measurement important in the composting process?

R:

Bulk density is calculated as $\frac{\text{mass}}{\text{volume}}$. It is crucial for determining porosity, air flow and moisture retention, directly affecting microbial activity and compost quality.

5. What would be the environmental impact if fresh compost is added in the plantations/agriculture or when the recommended percentage of compost mixture is not followed?

R:

Using fresh or excessive compost can release methane, impair growth through nitrogen depletion, and cause nutrient leaching, leading to water contamination.

1.5 Conclusion

Summarize the key findings and their implications.

1.6 References

List any sources or references used for understanding the experiment.