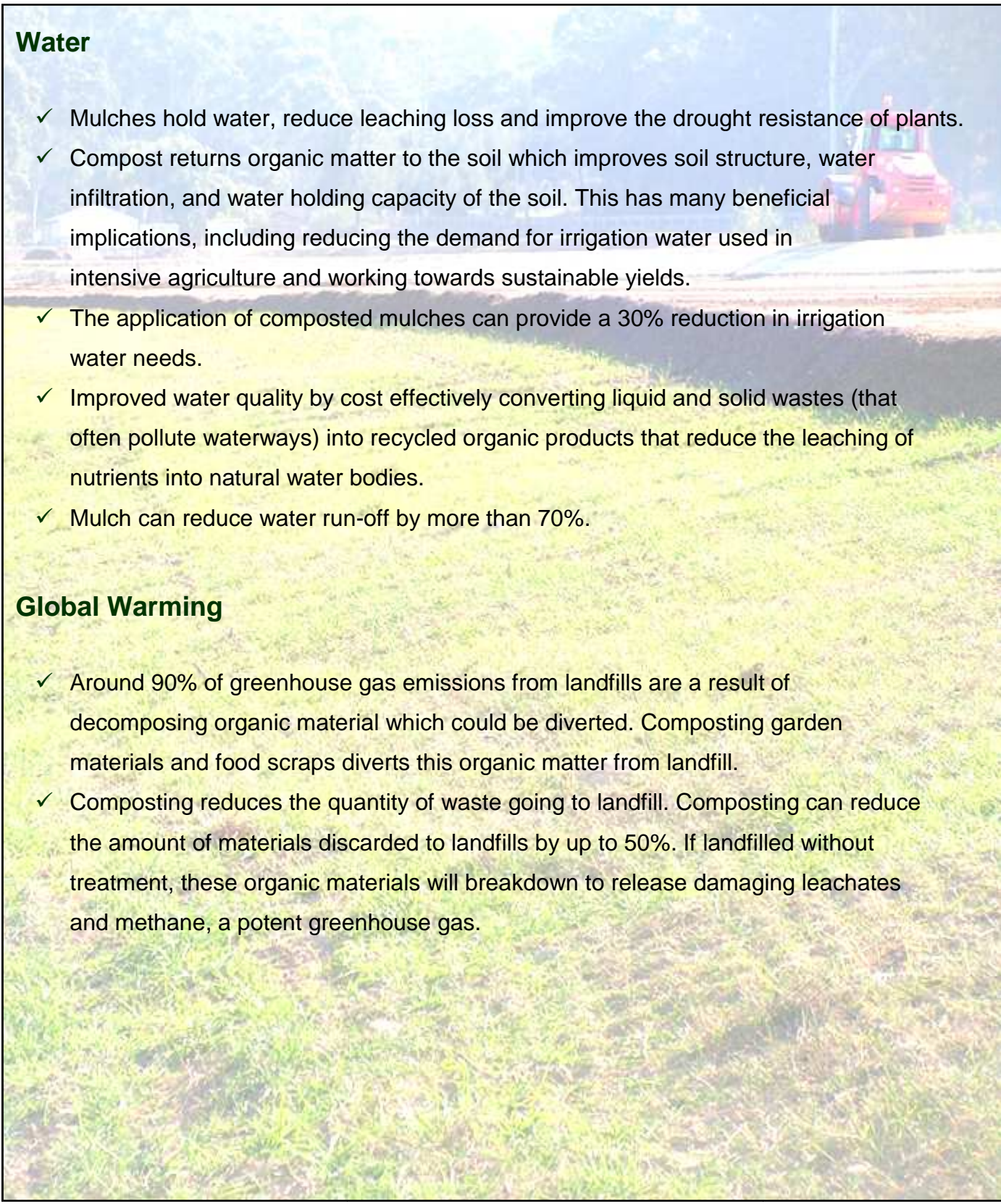


Environmental Benefits of Composting

Compost benefits the environment in many ways. Composting and the use of compost also have the potential to create significant cost savings for you.

Water

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- ✓ Mulches hold water, reduce leaching loss and improve the drought resistance of plants.
 - ✓ Compost returns organic matter to the soil which improves soil structure, water infiltration, and water holding capacity of the soil. This has many beneficial implications, including reducing the demand for irrigation water used in intensive agriculture and working towards sustainable yields.
 - ✓ The application of composted mulches can provide a 30% reduction in irrigation water needs.
 - ✓ Improved water quality by cost effectively converting liquid and solid wastes (that often pollute waterways) into recycled organic products that reduce the leaching of nutrients into natural water bodies.
 - ✓ Mulch can reduce water run-off by more than 70%.

Global Warming

- ✓ Around 90% of greenhouse gas emissions from landfills are a result of decomposing organic material which could be diverted. Composting garden materials and food scraps diverts this organic matter from landfill.
- ✓ Composting reduces the quantity of waste going to landfill. Composting can reduce the amount of materials discarded to landfills by up to 50%. If landfilled without treatment, these organic materials will breakdown to release damaging leachates and methane, a potent greenhouse gas.

At Home & in the Community

- ✓ Approximately half of the waste from an average household can be composted. Starting your own composting system can potentially reduce your household's contribution to landfill by around 50%.
- ✓ Compost can be used as a starting mix for your vegetable flowers and seedlings, dug into the soil to prepare your garden for planting, as mulch around your plants or spread over your lawn.

Local Sustainability

- ✓ Composting reduces the quantity of material being sent to landfill and therefore the impact of that material on local environments.
- ✓ Compost can help to make communities suffering from land degradation and water shortages to continue to make a life from the land.

Soil

- ✓ Compost can contribute to sustainable land management by improving soil quality, assisting plant growth and vegetation establishment, increasing water holding capacity, storing carbon in the soil and reducing the need for chemical fertiliser and pesticide inputs.
- ✓ Composting can assist to address the cause of nitrification and salinity.
- ✓ Compost can reduce soil erosion by up to 30% through adding structure to the soil and assisting plant growth and vegetation establishment
- ✓ Compost slowly releases macro and micro-nutrients for plant growth. This reduces the need for fertiliser, and makes existing fertiliser programs more effective
- ✓ Soil enriching composts improve the structure of sandy soils allowing them to retain moisture and nutrients longer; they also provide the nutrients necessary for healthy plant growth and intense colours throughout the growing season.
- ✓ Composts encourage nature to work for you. Earthworms and many other beneficial creatures flourish in enriched soils. Their activities help release essential nutrients, which strengthen plants and increase their resistance to disease.