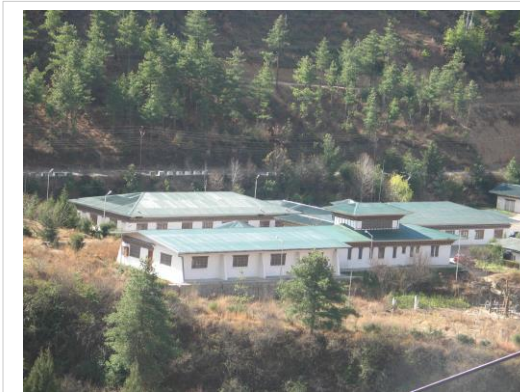


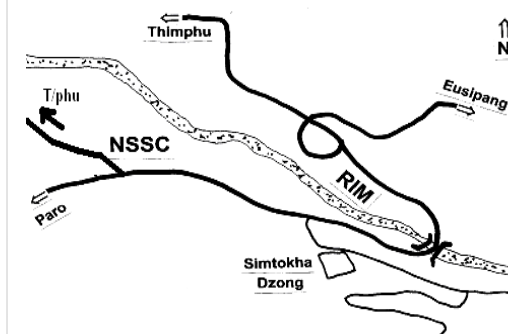


COMPOST

Leaflet No. 9



NSSC Complex at Semtokha



Location



Provide shade from rain and sun. Prevent water logging...(Day 1)

Turning the heap



Turn the heap once every seven days. Moisten with water if materials appear to be dry...(Day 7)

Harvesting the compost



Once the heap has turned into compost, spread to air dry for a few hours: Sieve

finished parts, pack into gunny bags and store in shade. Use unfinished parts for next composting process.....(Day 10)



Woody materials take longer to break down. Chop them into very small pieces



Do Not:

Press over the heap at any stage of piling or add too much water as this will create anaerobic patches in the heap.

For further information, contact:

Soil Microbiology Unit,
National Soil Services Center,
Semtokha.

Introduction

Composting is the decomposition or breakdown of organic waste materials by a mixed population of micro-organisms (microbes) in warm, moist and aerated environment. The wastes are gathered together into a heap so that the heat that is evolved in the process can be saved. As a result the temperature of the heap rises, thereby speeding up the basic degradation process of nature that normally occurs slowly in organic wastes, which fall on the surface of the ground. The final product of the process is *compost* or *humus* that is of value in agriculture for improving the structure and moisture retention properties of the soil and for supplying plant nutrients as compost finally breaks down to mineral matter.

Where to do it?



Choose site with sloping ground, shady place, and windbreaks

Pit or Heap method?

The heap method is preferred for easier handling and better aeration.

How to start?



Collect organic materials



Chop materials (smaller the better)

Building up the heap



Place a layer of tree pruning / sticks / maize stalks / artemesia over a stone base



Place layers of tree pruning/ sticks / maize stalks / artemesia in crossway



Start piling chopped materials in layers (or mixed) of 10-15 cm. *Do not press!* If dung used, make slurry of dung in water and spray over each layer enough to moisten but not drenching



Once the heap has attained a height of 1.20 m³ (spring, summer) & 1.50 m³ (autumn, winter) cover with artemesia/gunny bags