

## Growing Fun: A window into germination

Did you know you can turn an old CD case into a fun experiment? Instead of throwing out all those old CD cases you could use them to track the germination of a seed or even make a beautiful living grass card.

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- CD case
- a couple of spoonfuls of potting soil
- Grass seed or any dried bean (for example a lima bean or one of the heirloom bean varieties from Slow Food's Ark of Taste)
- water

### STEPS:

1. Make sure hinges of CD case are at the top.
2. Fill about halfway up with damp soil and place grass seeds at what will be the top. If using a bean, place towards the top so that the roots have room to grow.
3. Close case and tape bottom shut. This will keep roots from growing out.
4. Place near a sunny window and water through the hinge of the case at the top
5. Track and label plant growth.



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Slow Food Urban San Diego is the local chapter of an international nonprofit organization that supports good, clean, and fair food for all. To learn more about us and what we do here in San Diego, please visit [slowfoodurbansandiego.org](http://slowfoodurbansandiego.org).

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LOCAL HEALTHY FOOD FOR LOCAL HEALTHY KIDS  
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## Why we should waste less food

By Alejandro Marquez

We are in a food system which means that our food goes through a lot of steps to get to our plate.

Did you know that there are steps after it gets to our plate too? We waste a lot of food and that is bad. We need to change that.

How much food is wasted? The U.S. is the world's largest food waster. People in our country waste 1/3 of the food that is produced. Some studies say that 40% of food doesn't get eaten. We throw away so much food it weighs as much as 123 Empire State Buildings.

In 2013, 133 billion pounds of food worth \$161 billion dollars was thrown out in the U.S. Over 100 million people around the world waste food. Thirty-four million tons of food is wasted. Food waste is the number one product in landfills. Landfills are big holes in the ground where we throw all sorts of trash

like paper, metal, plastic, food and old things no one wants. Twenty to 40 percent of food goes to landfills and that is bad because rotting food makes methane gas. Methane gas is a greenhouse gas that is a huge climate change problem. Methane is so powerful it could kill people that are really close. If food waste were a country, it would be third in greenhouse gas emissions and one of those gasses is methane gas.

That is how much food is wasted and why food waste is bad.

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### WORD WISE

#### FOOD SYSTEM

All of the steps that food goes through before your plate and after your plate.

#### GLEANING

Saving food from landfills and giving it to people who need it.

#### LANDFILL

A place to dispose of waste.

#### WASTE

Waste is something like garbage or junk.

To learn more about food waste, check out these resources:

- TedX Teen: Rob Greenfield, "How to end the Food Waste Fiasco?" Youtube
- *Washington Post*. "Stop wasting food! Student volunteer helps Americas fight hunger and waste" [www.newsela.com/articles/foodwaste-tech/id/13676/](http://www.newsela.com/articles/foodwaste-tech/id/13676/)
- Food Rescue, "Wasted Food" [www.wastedfood.com/food-rescue/](http://www.wastedfood.com/food-rescue/)
- Further with Food, Center for Food Loss and Waste Solutions

# Composting

By Xander Jacob Valerio X



## WHAT IS COMPOST?

Compost is basically recycling food scraps to make fertilizer for plants. Sometimes people use worms to help them compost, and sometimes people compost by putting green waste and brown waste in a pile and then wait for a long time. Compost can be used to make fertilizer for plants. The fertilizer is the better soil for the plants. Compost is a material that mostly contains decayed materials, that are put in to help the soil. People compost with items such as lawn clippings, moist food, particles and manure. Compost needs green and brown waste. In short, composting is a way of reusing organic waste. We can compost: fruit, vegetable scraps, bread, bakery products, pasta, leaves, grass clippings, egg shells, cotton, wool, burlap, leather, paper, straw, hay, cow, steer, horse and chicken manure (from animals that eat plant and grains) ground bush (wood chips) tea leaves, coffee grounds, filters, plant pruning and weeds. Things that we can't compost include: meat, chicken, fish, salad dressing, cooking oils, grease, cat and dog feces, cheese, butter, dairy products, sawdust from treated lumber, twigs, sticks, plastic, foil, rocks and other inorganic materials. Now you know how to compost!

## HOW DO INSECTS HELP US COMPOST?

Vermiculture is composting with the amazing but ugly worms. Composting with worms is a magnificent way to recycle meal scraps and paper. Worms are amazing composters. The Red Wigglers are the best to use for house composting. These are the things you could feed composting worms: fruit and vegetable scraps and peelings, baked goods like bread, pizza crust, cheese, egg shells, potato salad, cereal, tea bags and leaves, coffee grounds and filters, paper. These are the things you should not feed the composting worms: meat and bones, fish, bottle caps, aluminum foil, glass, cat and dog feces, rubber bands, sticks, woody plant parts, plastic bags. Worm bedding is an important part of vermiculture. You may have your worm bin below the kitchen sink, in the basement or in the garage. Keep in mind worm composting is made in a shallow bin of about 10 to 12 inches deep.

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## WORD WISE

### BROWN LAYER

The brown layer is the layer in the composting bin where you put all the wood chips and leaves.

### COMPOST

The decomposing of organic matter to make fertilizer.

### GREEN LAYER

The green layer is the layer in the

composting bin which is all the vegetable and fruit scraps.

### MANURE

Manure is cow poop or penguin poop which helps the soil after being composted.

### RECYCLING

Recycling is basically reusing paper cardboard and plastic.

### RED WORMS

These are the best for composting.

### VERMICULTURE

Vermiculture is composting with worms. Composting with worms makes good fertilizer for plants.

### WORM BEDDING

Shredded paper is a very important part of vermiculture.

# Kitchen Fun: Cooking with cheese rind

Cooking healthy food is fun and good for you and your family. Here is a delicious way to get the most out of your food and reduce waste.

Parmesan is a wonderful ingredient in the kitchen but did you know that you can use the rind as well? Stop wasting those precious rinds and save them up in the freezer for some amazing uses. The natural rinds of cheeses like Parmesan, Pecorino, and Romano are air dried like a crust and edible. The rinds can be used to flavor soups, stews, rice and bean dishes. Rinds can even be thrown together with vegetable scraps such as onion, celery, carrot, mushroom stems, and herb stems like cilantro or parsley to make a delicious and nutritious broth.

## BASIC WHITE BEANS

- 1 pound dried white beans (great northern, cannellini, navy, for example. Or try these Ark of Taste Varieties: Zolfino or Purgaterio)
- 10 cups of water (or broth as mentioned above)
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cloves of garlic peeled and smashed (more if desired)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Cheese rind
- Heavy pot or slow cooker

1. Wash beans and place in pot with water, bay leaf, garlic, and oil.
2. Bring to the boil over high heat. Once at a boil, turn to low heat.
3. Simmer 30-60 min or until beans start to soften then add cheese rind and continue to simmer until fully cooked.
4. Drain if desired and season with salt and pepper to taste.

## TIPS:

Do not add salt or use salted stock or broth at the beginning of the cooking process. Adding salt early makes the beans tough.

Any fresh or dried herbs can be added during the cooking process as desired. Once cooked, beans can be eaten as they are or added to soup, pureed into a dip, put on pizza, mixed into pasta, tossed into salad, or paired with rice.

Dried beans are versatile, healthy and affordable!

