



Home Economics Food Waste Project 2018

Food Waste - Reduction Challenge

Why should we separate our waste?

When we separate our waste into three bins we ensure recyclable materials and food are salvaged so they can be repurposed into new materials.



When we dispose of food in the general waste bin, it will end up in landfill or the incinerator. When food ends up in landfill it rots and creates methane which contributes to climate change.

It is important not to contaminate our bins, when we throw food into the recycling bin the whole bin is contaminated and it reduces the chances of materials being recycled.

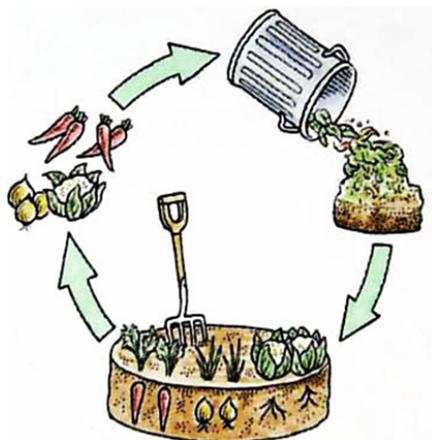
Where does our food waste end up when we use a separate food waste bin?

When we use our brown bins, the food waste is collected and used to make compost.



What is compost and why is it important?

Composting is nature's process of recycling decomposed organic materials into a rich soil like substance known as compost. Anything that was once living will decompose. By composting your organic waste you are returning nutrients back into the soil in order for the cycle of life to continue. Finished compost looks like soil; dark brown, crumbly and smells like a forest floor.



Composting is a natural method of both waste disposal and soil fertilisation. Once made, compost can be used to fertilise or feed soil and give it a better structure and moisture retaining properties. It can also be used as mulch in order to reduce the growth of weeds.

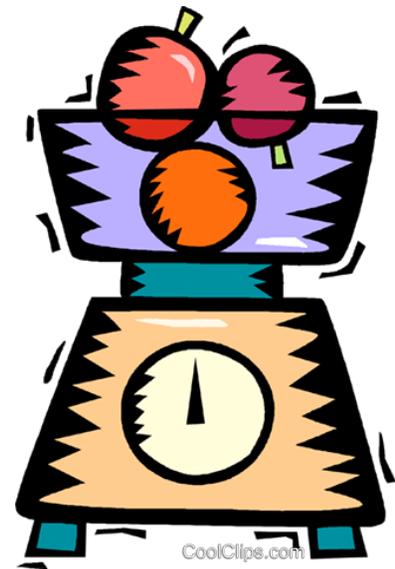
By composting, we are turning our food waste into a new a nutrient rich material which can be used to help new food and plants grow.

Class Challenge: Weigh Your Food Waste

- Separate classroom food waste into a separate food waste container.
- At the end of each day, weigh the food waste bin and record the weight into your log sheet.
- Identify the most common foods being disposed of by recording food waste items in your log sheet.
- If 1 kilogramme of food waste costs €3, calculate the cost of the food wasted that day.
- After weighing and recording the food waste dispose of food waste in the main bin.
- Repeat these steps each day for one week (or a suitable period) and calculate the total on the last day.
- Analyse where food was wasted and identify where food waste could be prevented.

What you need;

- Separate bin or container for food waste
- Compostable food waste bags or paper bags
- Weighing scales
- Calculator



Evaluation: Please complete the teacher evaluation form after completing this activity and send it to claudia@voiceireland.org or post to VOICE Ireland, 9 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2.

VOICE welcomes students to share their stories and achievements of how they are making their school a zero food waste zone! You can send articles and photos to claudia@voiceireland.org to be featured on the VOICE Ireland website and newsletter.

Optional: Learn more about composting



Invite StopFoodWaste.ie to come to your school to run a composting workshop.

You don't need to have a garden or an existing compost bin.

Stop Food Waste bring all materials and can help you set up a school compost bin if you have the facilities.