

# **University of Connecticut MASTER COMPOSTER PROGRAM**



**UConn Master Composters Make A  
Difference!**

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# WHAT IS COMPOST?



Compost is the end product of human accelerated, biological decomposition of plant and/or animal materials by a host of organisms including bacteria and fungi, insects and earthworms. It is a dark, crumbly, soil-like material and

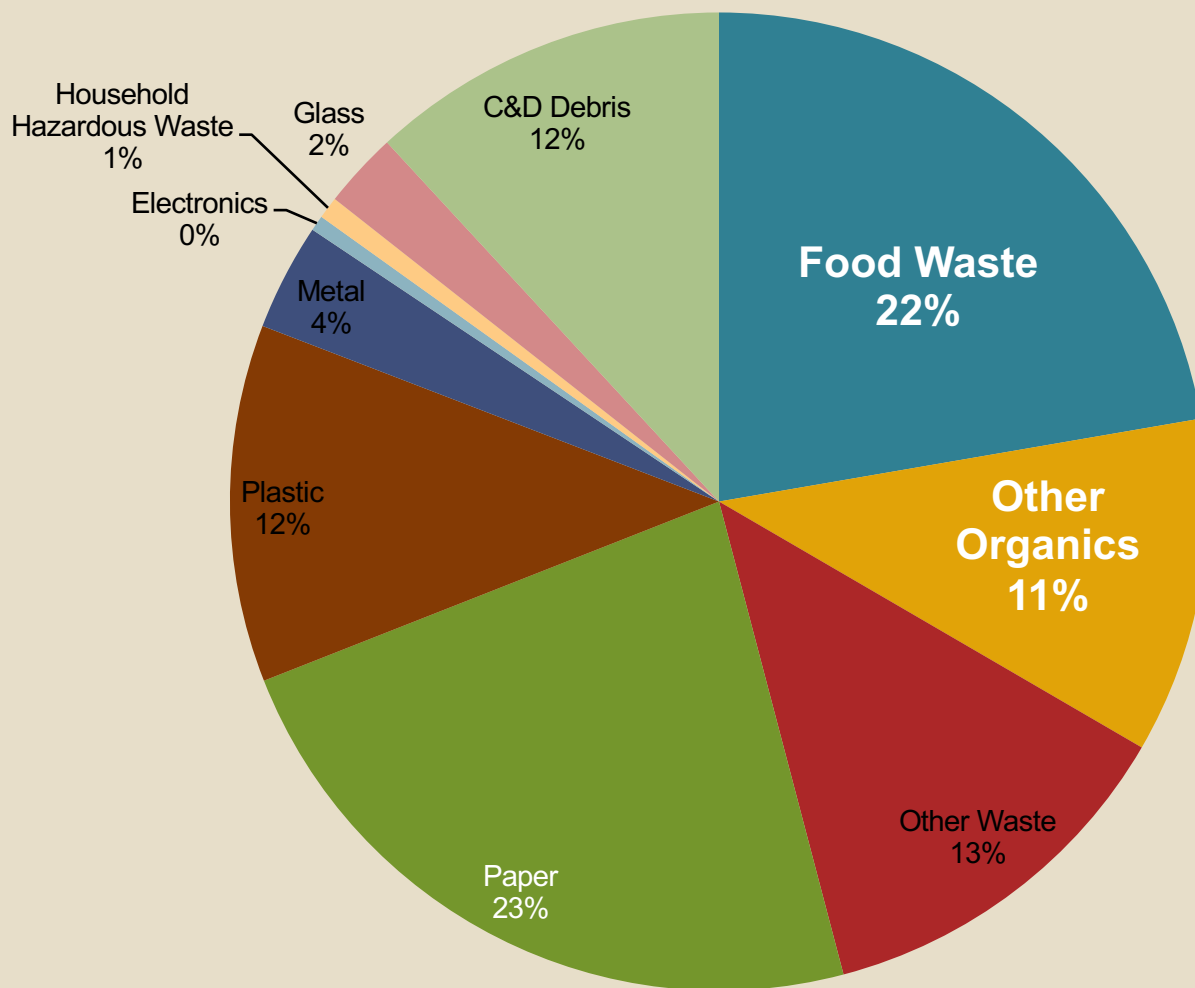
# Waste Not, Want Not!



**TRASH FOOTPRINT** – According to EPA in 2010, **40 million tons of food waste** generated in the U.S. (**219 lbs/yr/person**) & only 5% (about 1 million tons) recycled!

**CT DEEP** estimated that in 2015 the average CT resident generates about **4 pounds of trash daily**, that's **1370 pounds annually**, for a total of more than **2.4 million tons of trash each year!** And that's with about a **35 %** recycling rate!

# State of CT 2015 Solid Waste Composition



State of CT DEEP

[http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/waste\\_management\\_and\\_disposal/Solid\\_Waste\\_Management\\_Plan/CMS\\_Final\\_2015\\_MSW\\_Characterization\\_Study.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/deep/lib/deep/waste_management_and_disposal/Solid_Waste_Management_Plan/CMS_Final_2015_MSW_Characterization_Study.pdf)



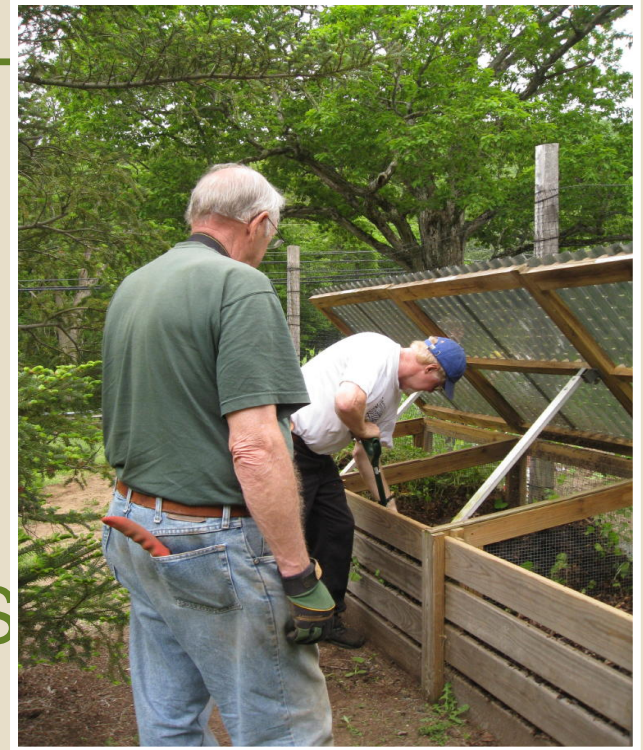
# Waste Reduction

1. **Source Reduction** – designing products to reduce amount of waste produced
2. **Recycling** – recovery of useful materials
3. **Composting** – organic wastes turned into useful soil amendment



# COMPOST – IT’S THE ROT THING TO DO!

- KEEP ORGANIC WASTES OUT OF LANDFILL/INCINERATOR
- CAN MODIFY pH
- IMPROVE SOIL DRAINAGE
- IMPROVE SOIL FERTILITY
- REDUCES WATERING NEEDS
- SUPPORTS SOIL LIFE
- MAY REDUCE DISEASE PROBLEMS

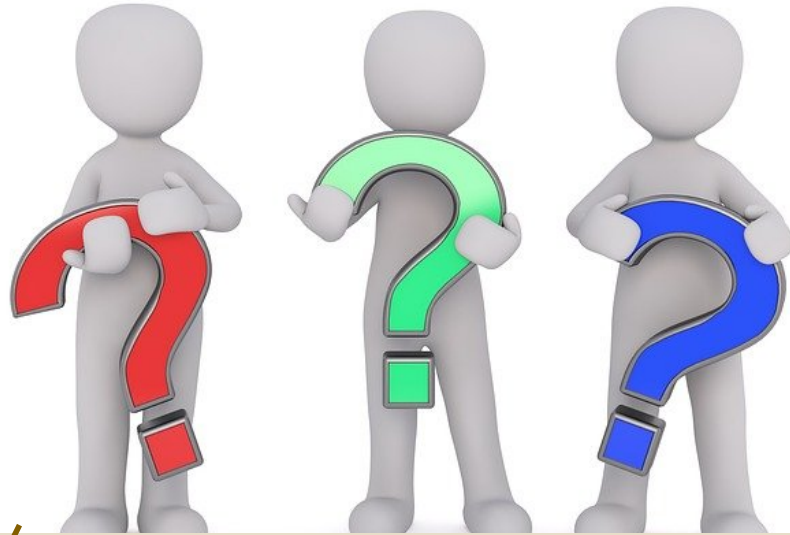


What can I  
compost?

When should I turn the  
pile?

Will it smell?

What is the CN  
ratio?



How big  
should the pile  
be?

Where should I locate the pile?

How do I know when it is  
done?





**In 2009, Gregory Moonie and I started the UConn  
Master Composter program.**

# **Train the Trainer**

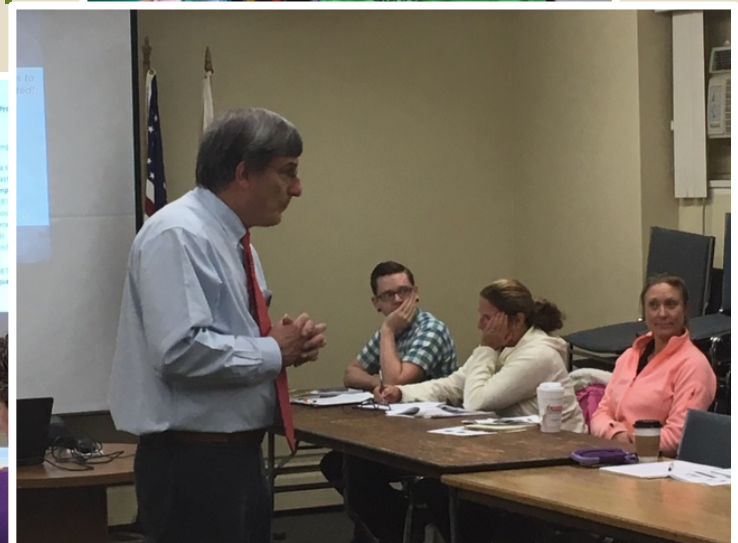
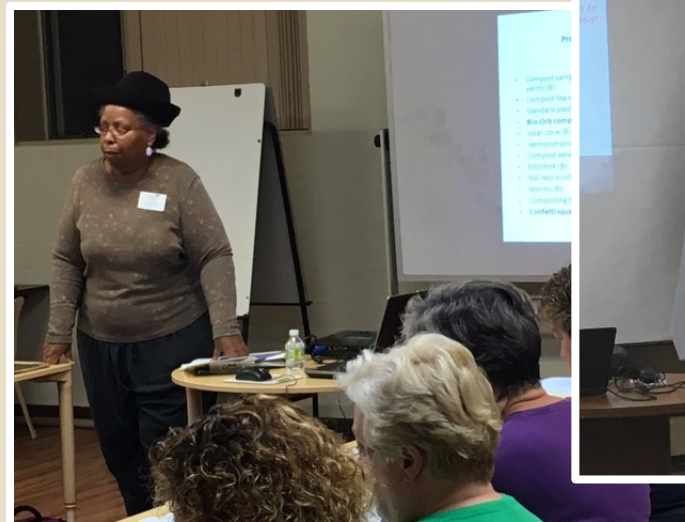
# GOALS OF MASTER COMPOSTER PROGRAM

1. To assist individuals and/or communities in reducing the amount of organic wastes going to incinerator or landfill.
2. To assist individuals and/or communities develop a usable soil enrichment product
3. To do the above by **providing composting education** to Connecticut residents through a variety of activities and venues such as composting classes, demonstration sites, workshops, written and web-based materials, etc.



# UConn Master Composter Program

- 4 Evening Presentations
- Cover basic and advanced composting as well as tips for outreach
- \$100 fee –speakers' travel





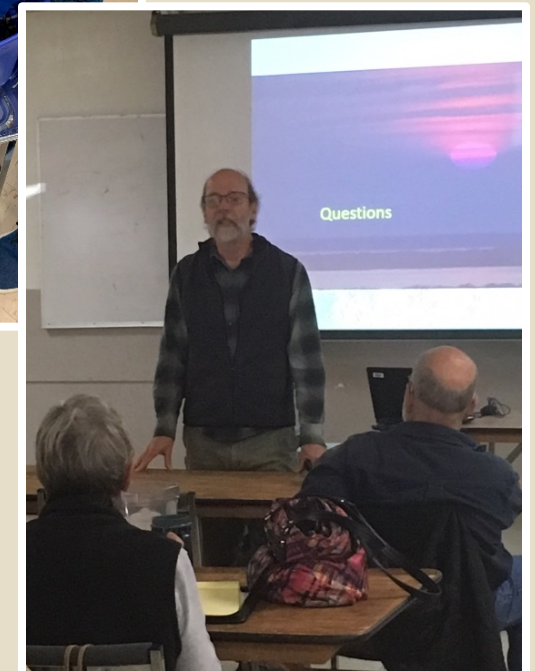
# UConn Master Composter Program

- 2 Saturday field trips
- Explore mid size composting operations in CT
- Meet farmers, commercial and municipal operators
- Have the most delicious lunch at Freund's Farm



# UConn Master Composter Program

- WORM DAY
- Initiated in 2013
- Participants learn about vermicomposting (composting with worms)
- Good worms
- Bad invasive worms
- Open to public – anyone wanting to make worm bins is welcome





# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities

**Certified after 20 volunteer hours of outreach**  
**Many opportunities - talks**



# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities Info tables at farmers markets





# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities

## Info tables at fairs & conferences



# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities Vermicomposting Workshops





# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities Vermicomposting Workshops



# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities

Getting kids interested in composting & gardening





# UConn Master Composter Outreach Activities

Built compost units for demonstration, education, and community gardens





# UConn Master Composter

## Community Composting



Bible St Community Garden, Greenwich



Stonington Community Center



Bethel Extension Center Demo



Mansfield Elementary School

Northeast Recycling Council [www.nerc.org](http://www.nerc.org) Great Community Composting Tip Sheets



# UConn Master Composter Statistics

Year	# Students Enrolled in Program	# Volunteer Activities	# Hours Donated by Volunteers	# Direct and Indirect Contacts
2009	11	22	188	236
2011	25	23	196	1231
2012	20	61	494	9741
2013	22	42	437	7139
2014	18	82	903	7300
2015	23	81	665	4675
2016	23	83	710	7743
2017	15	76	391	2757
2018	24	76	577	7017
2019	17	139	807	4407
<b>total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>5368</b>	<b>52246</b>

ACT AS IF WHAT YOU DO  
MAKES A DIFFERENCE ...IT  
DOES!

By William James