

COMPOST CONNECTION: BACTERIA

July continues the second installment of the 3-part Compost series, FBI; Fungi, Bacteria, Invertebrates. The focus this month is BACTERIA and its importance in the process of thriving compost production.

The natural, backyard compost pile is created by compiling "browns"; such as sticks, twigs, lawn clippings, dried leaves, and "greens"; such as garden waste, fresh lawn clippings, egg shells, vegetable and fruit waste. As these components begin to decompose, bacteria naturally forms with the aid of water, heat, and aeration. CAUTION: Not all waste is helpful in a compost pile, such as meats, fats, bones, seeds, weeds, or woods chemically treated, to name a few. "When in doubt, leave it out" is wise advice to a composter.

There are many available compost starter products available online, in garden centers, nurseries, and in big box stores. Be careful of chemicals you may be introducing to your compost, especially if you want to use your finished product on home food crops.

You will find many You Tube videos, and Internet articles relating to the building and advising of compost piles. A word of caution. Anyone can write and post an article on backyard composting. However, stick with articles that are researched-based coming from reliable sources such as Oklahoma State University, Tulsa Master Gardeners, or other sources with ".edu" in the web link.

Refer to our July, 2021, Compost Connection eNewsletter on our website, Tulsamastergardeners.org, for more information.