

How to Construct a Household Sweepings Pit



WHAT IS IT?

A pit dug at a convenient place in the household compound where organic material collecting in the compound, such as dried leaves and kitchen waste, can be added to make compost.

WHY DO WE DO IT?

A household sweepings pit is a simple way to make compost. As opposed to a compost pile, which requires organic materials to be collected and then assembled into a heap, a household sweepings pit does not require additional labor from households. Most households will sweep their compound every day; by collecting the sweepings into a pit and applying water when needed, these sweepings will decompose and can be used as fertilizer rather than being discarded.

Method

STEP 1

Locate the household sweepings pit near an area that gets swept often, such as the kitchen, the house, and the goat and chicken pens.

STEP 2

Each pit should be approximately 60-75 cm wide and between 75-100 cm deep.

STEP 3

Sweep organic materials directly into pits. Kitchen waste can also be added. Designate a separate pit to hold the inorganic waste (plastics, batteries, glass, non-biodegradable materials, etc.). Be sure inorganic waste does not get put into the household sweepings pit.

STEP 4

Moisture is crucial to the decomposition process. Rainwater can be directed into the pits and/or wastewater applied in dry times.

STEP 5

Once a pit is filled, the material should be left to decompose for several months. A new pit can be constructed for use while the old pit is left to decompose.

STEP 6

The more usable compost is usually found at the bottom of the pit and can be harvested when needed. Once the compost is removed, daily sweepings can again be added to the pit.

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