



FREESTATE
FARMS

COMPOST QUALITY GUIDE

Compost has gained a lot of attention and attracted a number of new products to the market. How can you make sure that what you're buying is really compost or, even better, a high-quality compost? Here are some best practices.



Good composts have lab results

Many of compost's benefits are microscopic, so regular testing is the only way to give full feedback to the composter and transparency to the user. First, a signed report should show that the compost passes tests for pathogens and metals so that it is safe to use. Second, information about stability, maturity, organic matter, and (potentially) nutrient content help show if the compost will be good for your garden. Lastly, seed germination and vigor results demonstrate if the compost will help your plants thrive.

Checking compost without a lab report

If a lab report from the past three or four months isn't available, you may be able to observe some red flags.



WHEN MADE INCORRECTLY, COMPOST CAN HARM SOIL QUALITY AND PLANT GROWTH, POTENTIALLY LEADING TO COSTLY PLANT REPLACEMENTS AND UNHAPPY CUSTOMERS.



COMPOST SHOULD BE A DARK BROWN

COLOR, even inside of any small twigs. If the inside of a twig is still white or green-ish, or the material looks similar to a mulch, the compost may not be processed long enough and, as a result, tie up soil nutrients instead of providing them.



GOOD COMPOST SHOULD SMELL NATURAL AND EARTHY

Avoid compost that smells like ammonia, has any foul odors, or that doesn't have any smell—all signs of a bad compost.



COMPOST SHOULD FEEL SMOOTH

and can have some small clumps that break apart easily. Avoid composts that feel slimy or grainy since these can be signs of non-organic material or inadequate processing.



ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT THEIR COMPOSTING PROCESS

Process: All compost should undergo a Process to Further Reduce Pathogens to kill pathogens and weed seeds.

Time: High-end composting systems can make compost in 45 days; otherwise, compost typically takes four to nine months. Because it's a biological process, there are no short-cuts.

Ingredients: Compost can contain a variety of feedstocks—yard debris, food scraps, manure, and human waste, for example—as well as “nutritional” additives. These inputs aren't always readily disclosed, so ask about specific inputs and make sure you are comfortable with them.



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GROW GOOD COMPOST

Local,
organic &
sustainable
products



Use our compost in your flower beds, vegetable gardens, and lawns to help them grow faster, healthier and, for some vegetables, larger and tastier.



SAFE FOR PEOPLE, PETS & PLANTS

No manure. No human waste.
No fertilizers. Just the good stuff.



BETTER INGREDIENTS MAKE BETTER COMPOST

We add nutrient-rich food scraps to
the local yard-waste recipe to better
feed your plants and lawns.



GROWING A BETTER, GREENER FUTURE TOGETHER

Farmer-founded to help make local
soils healthier and our community
more sustainable.

Certified, local compost to help you Grow Good.



GROW GOOD COMPOST: TILLING

Perfect for enriching existing soil to give plants and
lawns the immediate and long-term nutrients they
need to grow stronger and more beautiful.



GROW GOOD COMPOST: TOPDRESSING

Crafted specifically for topdressing lawns and
plant beds each year to boost your soil's nutrients.



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