

## Gladstone Regional Seed Library

### What is it?

A seed library collection is where the library loans out seeds instead of books or DVDs.

### How does it work?

Gladstone Regional Library members borrow seeds for free then plant and tend to their crops. The return on this long-term loan is not fresh produce but instead the return of some seeds from the yield. These seeds are then made available for members to plant next season

### Seed Donations:

The library is happy to accept donated seeds. When giving a donation you will be required to fill in a seed donation form with as much details about the plant as possible. Gladstone Regional Council are not accountable for the content of seed donations and any errors in the information provided with them.

### Information Handouts:

This range of information sheets and activities have been designed to provide basic information on the seeds available and help teachers and parents encourage and inspire their children's interest in nature.

### Curriculum Ideas:

Science: Recycling, the environment and sustainability, food and nutrition.

Numeracy: Measuring weight/amount and types of material, using fractions/percentages (what goes in and how much comes out).

Literacy: Compost/garden diary (tasks, observations), making a garden scrapbook.

Art: Environmental art, collage of compost/natural materials.

History/geography: Study of plants and their uses historically for eating, medicine, making dyes. Make a scale drawing of the garden.

## Further Reading and References

The following resources contain more information about the topic:

1. A Beginner's Guide to Composting. (2013). 1st ed. [ebook] Foodwise. Available at:  
<http://www.foodwise.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/Compost-ONLINE.pdf> [Accessed 8 Jul. 2014].
2. Your Energy Savings, (2014). *Composting*. [online] Available at:  
<http://yourenergysavings.gov.au/waste/reducing-recycling/kitchen-food-waste/composting> [Accessed 8 Jul. 2014].
3. Composting Fact Sheet. (2009). 1st ed. [ebook] Available at:  
[http://www.cleanup.org.au/PDF/au/cleanupaustralia\\_facsheet\\_composting.pdf](http://www.cleanup.org.au/PDF/au/cleanupaustralia_facsheet_composting.pdf) [Accessed 8 Jul. 2014].

Seeds are freely available at all the Gladstone Regional Library branches:

- Agnes Water Library
- Boyne Tannum Community Centre
- Calliope Library
- Gladstone City Library
- Miriam Vale Library
- Mount Larcom Library
- Philips Street Family Precinct

For more information visit:

[www.gladstonelibraries.qld.gov.au](http://www.gladstonelibraries.qld.gov.au)

# Gladstone Regional Libraries

## Seed Library DIY Collection

### Composting



Image: Compost and Garden Waste  
Source: Antranas

# Composting

Composting is an easy way to reduce your household waste while creating a rich fertiliser for your plants and garden.

Compost ingredients are broken down into “Green” and “Brown” materials.

## Brown Ingredients:

- Twigs
- Dried leaves
- Straw
- Shredded newspaper/cardboard
- Soil

## Green Ingredients:

- Fresh clippings
- Vegetable scraps
- Egg shells
- Coffee grinds and teabags
- Manure (horse, chook or cow)

## What to Compost

Fruits and vegetables	Eggshells
Coffee grounds and filters	Tea bags
Nut shells	Shredded newspaper
Cardboard	Paper
Yard trimmings	Grass clippings
Houseplants	Hay and straw
Leaves	Sawdust
Wood chips	Cotton and Wool Rags
Dryer and vacuum cleaner lint	Hair and fur
Fireplace ashes	

## What NOT to Compost

Coal or charcoal ash	Dairy products and egg
Diseased/insect-ridden plants	Fats, grease, lard, or oils
Meat or fish bones and scraps	Plastics
Metals	Chemicals
Glossy magazines	Gum leaves
Treated pine wood/sawdust	
Pet wastes (e.g., dog or cat feces, soiled cat litter)	
Yard trimmings treated with chemical pesticides	

## Backyard Compost Heap

### Equipment:

- Timber Planks, Bricks, roofing sheets to make a three sided enclosure
- Garden fork to “turn the heap”

### Location:

- Choose a sunny location to help decomposition
- Ensure heap is on open earth so worms can escape the heat of the pile if necessary
- A spot that is easily accessed by wheelbarrow

## Compost Bin

### Equipment:

There are a variety of ready-made compost bins available to suit various situations.

- Enclosed bins – take up less space but are slower at composting
- Tumbler bins – take up little space, compost quickly but once full no new material can be added until the whole bins content is composted
- Worm farm – great for small spaces indoors or outdoors

Compost bins work best with a lid to keep pests out and moisture (and some odours) in.

## Tips & Tricks

- Smelly compost: add more “Brown” ingredients and turn the heap to add more air into it
- Not composting: heap is either too dry (add water) or too wet (add newspaper or straw)
- Finished compost is usually less than half the volume of the materials you started with, but it’s much denser
- Covering the top of the heap with black plastic in winter keeps the heat in and helps decomposition
- Soak finished compost in water to “brew” compost tea, a nutrient-rich liquid that can be used for foliar feeding or for watering plants in your garden, backyard, or houseplants.
- Apply finished compost to your garden about 2-4 weeks before you plant, giving the compost time to integrate and stabilize within the soil.