



Solana Center Composter Quarterly Newsletter Fall 2013

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Featured Article

As composters, we definitely love our worms. And if you have a healthy vermicompost bin, then you definitely know there's lots of love between the worms too. But how exactly do our worm bins become so populous? Red wiggler worms are frequent reproducers. If conditions in the bin are ideal, each worm can produce up to 7 worm hatchlings per week...

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Upcoming Events

September 17

The Magic of Manure: Protect your waterways, save money, and improve your soil and landscape!



When you think of San Diego County, horses aren't usually the first thing that come to mind, but we do have the second largest number of horses in the state (only Riverside County has more). One of the challenges of owning these beautiful beasts is that horses can create up to 50 pounds of manure per day! Horse owners have the unique problem of having to

REI Kearny Mesa
Composting Workshop

September 21
Sunshine Gardens
Composting Workshop

September 28
Rincon Del Diablo Water
District Rainwater
Harvesting Workshop

October 5
Lakeside River Park
Composting Workshop

October 5
San Diego Zoo
Composting Workshop

October 13
Walnut Grove Park
Horse Heritage Festival

November 9
Bayside Community
Center Composting
Workshop

Click [here](#) to view our
upcoming events page
and to register for a
workshop.

Composting questions or concerns?

Call the ROTLINE, our
composting hotline, where
our composting experts will
answer your composting
questions.

dispose of this manure. Composting is an easy and economical way to do so. As many of you know, compost can be used as an amendment to create healthier soil, which in turn leads to healthier plants. Compost improves soil aeration, increases water retention, and provides slow-released nutrients to your plants. It also introduces beneficial bacteria and supports a healthy soil food web.

Benefits of Manure Composting

- **Kill weed seeds and pathogens** - When temperatures of 131 degrees (Fahrenheit) are reached within your compost pile, harmful pathogens like *E.coli* and salmonella are destroyed along with any weed seeds and many medications given to your livestock. This is very important especially if you'll be using the finished compost on your garden, or on pastures where animals graze.
- **Less odors and a smaller pile** - The composting process reduces bulk by about 50% which means you'll have less material to deal with and more space available. Plus, composted manure has far less odor than uncomposted manure.
- **Reduce flies** - The temperatures reached by a well-managed compost pile will also kill fly eggs and larvae. The reduction of the manure pile size reduces attractive breeding grounds for those flies that pester both you and your livestock.
- **Save money and help the environment** - Composting onsite eliminates the need for manure to be hauled away which, in addition to being costly, unnecessarily fills up precious space in our landfills where it can release harmful methane gas. For example, Patty Morton, owner of Pathfinder Farms in San Marcos, was paying \$430 per month in hauling fees to dispose of the manure produced by 25 horses on her property. Now, she saves that money and has great compost for her landscaping, and at the same time, diverts waste from the landfill. Also, utilizing finished compost on your plants creates additional cost savings-- you won't have to purchase synthetic fertilizers or amendments to provide nutrients to your landscape or garden. Why not put that manure to good use and save money in the process!?
- **Follow the rules** - According to California's Commercial Recycling Bill AB 341

(760) 436-7986 ext. 222

Our educators are very busy and not always near the phone. Please be patient, leave a message, and we'll get back to you within 48 hours.

Thanks to our donors

We would like to give a special thank you to the following donors:

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Warren & Patty Wergeles

(<http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dpw/recyclinghome.html>), which went into effect July 2012, commercial horse ventures generating four or more cubic yards of solid waste per week need to arrange for it to be recycled, reused, composted or otherwise diverted from the waste stream. Again, composting solves the problem.

- **Protect your waterways** - Unfortunately, all of San Diego waterways have higher levels of bacteria than the state allows. Manure is not wholly to blame, of course, but it does contain bacteria that contribute significantly to polluting our waterways if not managed properly. Use of finished compost on landscaping and gardens means less reliance on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides that can also harm our waterways.

Fundamentals of a Successful Manure Composting System

- **Location** - A flat surface is ideal to help prevent run-off from fresh manure from reaching our waterways.
- **Compostables** - Manure is not the only component you'll be adding to the compost pile. Any natural bedding material, like...

Click [here](#) to continue reading.

ROTLINE: How do I get rid of fruit flies?



Thank you to all of our volunteers! We would like to specifically acknowledge the following volunteers for their support:

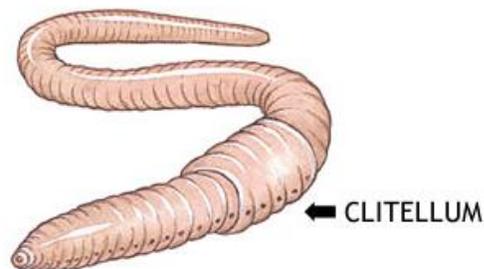
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Almost every composter is familiar with the fruit fly. No matter how hard we try, it always seems like the fruit fly is a constant companion in the kitchen or the compost bin. The question constantly comes up: "If I keep my food waste in a sealed container, why do I have fruit flies?" Unfortunately even the smallest amounts of nitrogen-rich material can attract fruit flies. And unbeknownst to many people, we are usually the ones bringing the fruit flies into our home! Most frequently at farmers markets where the produce is out in the open and rarely refrigerated, fruit flies have easy access to the surfaces of food. And because fruit fly eggs are so tiny (about the size of the period at the end of this sentence), the eggs often go unnoticed as we bring our fruits and veggies home. So how do we get rid of them? One of the first steps is...

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Summer Love: Red Wiggler Reproduction

As composters, we definitely love our worms. And if you have a healthy vermicompost bin, then you definitely know there's lots of love between the worms, too. But how exactly do our worm bins become so populous? Red wiggler worms are frequent reproducers. If conditions in the bin are ideal, each worm can produce up to 7 worm hatchlings per week. And because red wigglers are hermaphrodites, with both male and female parts, every worm in your bin has the potential to lay and fertilize eggs. When a red wiggler worm matures, it develops a swollen band near its head called a clitellum that stores the eggs and sperm.



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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Maya Que



Say hello to our youngest, and one of the most dedicated, volunteers here at the Solana Center. This lovely young lady is Maya Que. She won a contest to become a community composting ambassador through a program called Global Disposal Inc and has been helping us out here at the Solana Center as part of that role. Maya has been maintaining the compost bins at the 4S Ranch Community Garden where we have an

During reproduction, two worms join at the clitellum and exchange seminal fluid. During the three hours of being joined, each worm forms a mucus ring around itself. As they separate, the mucus rings harden and the worms begin to...

Click [here](#) to continue reading.

Try This At Home: Hatching Worm Eggs

Looking for a fun, back-to-school experiment for the kids? Try hatching some worm eggs with this simple experiment!

What you need: worm eggs, two jar lids (one larger than the other), paper towels, corn meal

1. Collect an assortment of eggs from your worm bin
2. Cut a paper towel to fit into the smaller lid
3. Wet the paper towel and place it into the lid
4. Place the eggs onto the paper towel and sprinkle corn meal onto them
5. Place another moist paper towel on top
6. Cover everything with the larger lid



Leave the lids in a cool place out of the sun. Keep the paper towels moist and keep an eye out for baby worms! Make sure to put the worms into your worm bin as soon as they hatch.

active composting demo site, supported by the County of San Diego. Maya attends the local middle school there and rides her bike to the garden on a weekly basis to make sure the compost bins are in tip-top shape. She enjoys chopping up the compostable materials, turning the piles, and making sure they have the proper moisture levels. She loves seeing her hard work be put to good use as the gardeners add the finished compost to their gardens. Many tomatoes, peppers, and beans have her to thank for some wonderful nutrients! Keep up the great work Maya!

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer please sign up on our [website](#)

This newsletter is made possible with the support of the cities of San Diego, Carlsbad, and Encinitas and the County of San Diego



Author & Photographer: Nancee Foglesong

Stone Brewing Co.: Craft Beer and Compost

As San Diego's largest and most popular craft brewery, most people think of beer when they think of Stone Brewing Co. But unbeknownst to many locals, Stone is also one of the largest food waste composters in the region. Through its two spectacularly popular restaurants (one in Escondido and the newest in Point Loma), Stone is leading the way in bringing the farm to the table then back to the farm! Stone currently composts 50% of all its waste for use at their award-winning gardens in Escondido and at Stone Farms, where they use organic-methods to grow produce for use in their dishes.



Stone Farms in Escondido

Steve Robbins, Director of Hospitality for Stone Brewing Co., says despite the challenge of coordinating composting on such a large-scale, the program aligns perfectly with Stone's values and is another example of practicing what they preach. In addition to their composting and gardening efforts, Stone also lives out their environmental standards through their menus. They provide vegan and vegetarian dishes on all their menus as well as Meatless Monday options. All their produce is local and organic, their meats are produced sustainably, and all seafood is deemed sustainable by the Seafood Watch List as recommended by the Monterrey Bay



Aquarium. And importantly, none of their dishes or beverages include GMOs or high fructose corn syrup. According to Steve, composting was just the natural choice; reducing their waste costs, lowering Stone's carbon footprint, and increasing the nutrient value of their farm's soil and produce.

For more information on the Stone Farms and Stone Brewing Company, click [here](#).