

Garbage in, Garbage out

Management Of Biodegradable Wastes

Compost:

The manure made up by biodegradable waste i.e. kitchen wastes and garden wastes are called compost manure. It is an organic matter that has been decomposed and recycled as a fertilizer and soil nutrient. It increases the fertility of the soil.



Vermicomposting:

- Vermicomposting is the process of conversion of biodegradable waste into manure with the help of a special type of earthworms called red worms.
- A layer of sand or chicken mesh is used as the base to which all types of biodegradable waste including dried leaves, husk, vegetable peels and remnants of fruit, dried animal excreta newspaper, cardboard etc. A little water is sprinkled on this layer. On preparing this mixture, add the red worms to it and covered with a layer of grass or a sheet of cloth.
- The work, however, is not done yet. Red worms need to be fed. They do not have teeth. They have what is called a **gizzard**. This helps the worms grind their food.
- Fruit and vegetable remains, tea leaves, grass etc. act as food for the red worms and should be buried 2-3 cm deep in the soil. In a day, a worm can eat up as much food as it weighs.

- However, pickles, milk, vinegar and salty materials might help in the growth of disease-causing microorganisms and hence should not be added to the pit.
- They should not be kept in a very hot or a very cold environment. Red worms need care and water. They have the potential to double up in a month's time, given proper nourishment and care.

The product, vermicompost, is excellent manure for gardens, nurseries, farms etc.


