

Our waste and why compost matters

What is compost?

Compost is a nutrient-rich soil-like material made from decomposed organic material, that is useful to plant-growing practices from domestic gardens to agriculture.

What is composting?

Composting is the process whereby organic waste (mostly food waste and garden waste) is “recycled” through controlled decomposition. This paper presents the benefits of composting that turn undesirable and waste material into a vitally important resource that we can all contribute to and benefit from the use of. Composting, or “organics recycling”, can occur at different scales that can be divided into two main types:

- **Domestic/Community Composting**

Community Composting usually occurs in small scale compost piles in households, community gardens, or schools; does not require specialist equipment, monitoring, logistics, or expertise

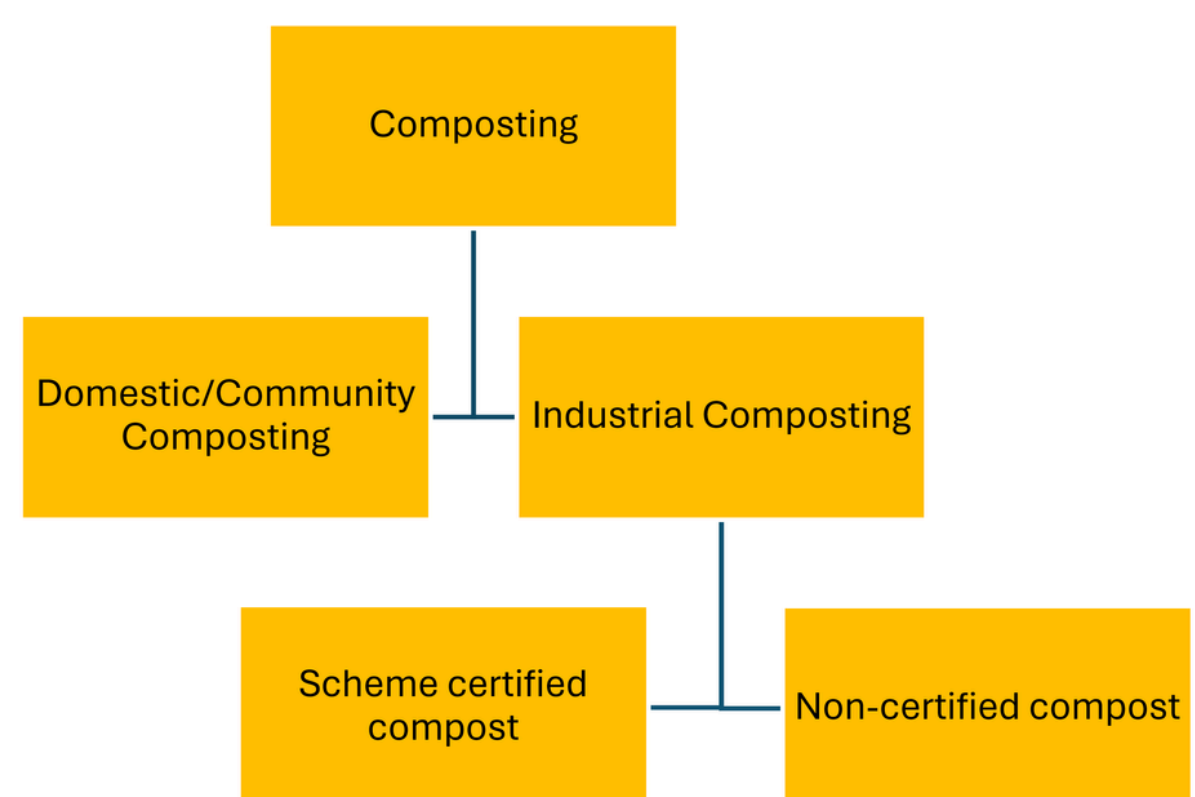
- **Industrial Composting**

Industrial Composting involves a complex chain of stakeholders and logistics to collect, transport, and process organic waste. Organic waste is collected from households, commercial operations, and from municipal waste sites, it is then transported to processing facilities.

Consequently, many operators have decided to sign up to the Compost Certification Scheme. Certified compost must pass a range of laboratory tests and meet health and safety standards to ensure high quality. The finished product can be used in wide variety of purposes in agriculture, land restoration, forestry, and horticulture.

Why is composting important?

Composting is a complex industry that contributes to a more robust and sustainable circular economy. The move towards composting more organic waste aligns with the sustainability goals of many companies, governments, and international organisations, by diverting over 4 million tonnes of organic waste from landfills and transforming it into 2 million tonnes of certified quality compost.



The use of compost helps protect ecosystems in a variety of ways. From supporting disease resistance in plants, improving microbiology diversity, soil structure, as well as water and nutrient retention. Compost is predominantly used in agricultural, horticulture, forestry, and land restoration and is especially important in organic and regenerative agriculture.

While there is growing momentum to reduce organic waste in domestic and commercial settings, composting allows for the inevitable food-waste that is produced to once again become a valuable product to a wide range of industries.

Quality compost is created

Agriculture
Horticulture
Land restoration
Forestry

Testing and certification ensures quality

Pathogens
Toxic elements
Physical contaminants

Composting

Home Composting
Open turned windrows
In vessel

Biodegradable products are produced

Food
Plants
Animal products

Waste is created

Food waste
Horticultural waste
Agriculture waste
Animal by-products

Waste is disposed of appropriately

Original waste producer
Private waste companies
Local authorities

