

May 3-9, 2020

# International Compost Awareness Week

Started in Canada in 1995, International Compost Awareness Week quickly spread to the United States and is observed all over the world to help people of all ages and ambitions understand the benefits of returning organic material to the soil.



## *Celebrating ICAW in libraries*

### Composting as a storytime theme

- ☐ Composting books for children and young adults
  - Compost Stew (ages 3-7)
  - Composting: Nature's Recyclers (ages 5-10)
  - Leaf Litter Critters (ages 8-12)
- ☐ Include a compostable snack
  - Strawberries
  - Bananas
  - Apples

*Consider holding the storytime outdoors and point out compostable materials such as leaves*

The benefits of composting are numerous. This year's ICAW theme, Soil Loves Compost, focuses on one of its key benefits, returning nutrients to the soil which helps to support soil's microbiome. Supporting the soil microbiome with the addition of organic material helps plants grow healthier, increases the nutritional value of crops, improves the water retention of soil and reduces erosion.

Another benefit of composting includes reducing the amount of waste diverted to landfills, which is why many interested in zero waste consider "rot" (composting) to be the fourth R- Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and now, Rot.

Don't worry, healthy compost isn't stinky. In fact, a foul odor is compost's way of saying something's not right.

[Learn more.](#)

### Create a compost display

- ☐ Display the 2020 ICAW poster
- ☐ Feature composting books (See storytime list)
- ☐ "Shelf-stable" compost materials
  - Brown leaves
  - Shredded newspaper
  - Toilet paper or paper towel tubes
- ☐ Compost collection bins (countertop or from collection service)
- ☐ Information sheets about compost or resource lists

### STEM composting activities

- Measure the Ph of compost materials or finished and unfinished compost
- Identify invertebrates in an outdoor compost pile
- Examine finished compost under a microscope