Basic Backyard Composting Webinar Questions- April 22, 2020

Can you put bones with no meat on them in the compost bin?

No, putting bones in your compost bin could attract pests and rodents. Bones also take quite a long time to decompose.

Can you compost coffee grounds?

Absolutely!

I already have a problem with ants in my yard. Will adding a compost bin increase the amount of ants?

A compost bin shouldn't add any additional ants to your yard or attract ants.

How do you measure the brown to green ratio? Just eyeball it?

You can eyeball it. As long as you are adding significantly more browns than greens.

Do pine cones make good brown material?

Yes.

When starting a tumbler compost bin do you add soil?

You do not need to add soil to a tumbler compost bin but still try and layer with browns and greens at the start.

How long does the process take from start to finish?

It depends on the size of your pile, what you put in it, and how well you tend to it. It could take as short as one month or as long as one year. Typically, it takes about 6 months.

Will my tumbler bin still work even though it isn't touching the natural ground?

Yes, bacteria and fungi will break down the material.

Do you add water every time you add brown material?

No, only add water when you first start your bin and when your pile looks dry. Winter is an especially good time to add water to your bin because the compost will dry out faster.

Do you have to add the earthworms to your bin?

No, the worms will find their way to your bin.

What pH should be compost bin maintain?

A new compost pile will start out quite acidic. As the materials begin to break down, it becomes a more neutral pH. Finished compost should have a pH between 6 and 8 but measuring the pH of your compost is not essential to the process.