



International Composting Awareness Week
Australia



Centre for Organic
Research & Education

MEDIA RELEASE - 4th MARCH 2014

**Launching International Composting Awareness Week (ICAW) 2014
5-11 May 2014**

“DON’T SCRAP THE CARBON”

The Centre for Organic Research and Education (CORE) launches today the 9th edition of International Composting Awareness Week (ICAW) across Australia.

ICAW encourages people to start composting - and making use of compost! Costa Georgiadis (who is presenting on Gardening Australia) is the ambassador for the week, although ICAW is not just a week. Momentum is starting to build as more and more people get involved online and by publishing events on the website – for free - from March onwards. Activities in your area can be promoted or found on www.compostweek.com.au. People are encouraged to get together and develop their own initiatives to increase awareness of the benefits of composting and compost usage.

ICAW promotes food waste reduction and recycling, as Eric Love, Chairman of CORE, explains:

“Each year over half of our household garbage is made up of food and garden organics. Most of this material can be recycled by composting it.”

As organic waste decomposes in landfill it produces the greenhouse gases, methane and carbon dioxide. These greenhouse gases contribute to worldwide climate change. Landfill gas typically consists of 54% methane and 40% carbon dioxide. Methane is twenty four times more damaging as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

Eric Love, continues, “Organic materials diverted from landfills and properly composted can help in the effort to reverse the effects of climate change. By applying this compost to gardens, farms and other land uses, millions of tonnes of carbon will be stored in the soil. This acts to lower the atmospheric temperatures that lead to changes in our climate.”

Compost produced by the recycled organics industry is already providing Australian landscape, horticulture and agricultural industries with affordable solutions to improve productivity and environmental outcomes.

ICAW is supported by State, Regional and Local Governments around Australia. The Victorian Government through the Metropolitan Waste Management Group (MWMG) as well as



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numerous metropolitan councils such as The Hills Shire Council and Penrith City Councils have supported ICAW over a number of years and have already confirmed their support for the 2014 edition of ICAW.

The key points to know about composting

By turning food scraps and organic garden waste into compost you can:

- ✓ Improve soil quality and garden vitality by releasing the rich nutrients in the compost into your soil
- ✓ Recycle valuable nutrients and reduce the use of artificial fertilisers
- ✓ Prevent greenhouse gas emissions and reduces the amount of organic waste going to landfill
- ✓ Save money

What to add to your home composting bin:

Include things such as vegetable and fruit scraps, vegetable oil, prunings and lawn clippings, tea bags and coffee grounds, vacuum dust, hairs, shredded paper and cardboard, used potting mix, egg shells, flowers.

What not to add to your home composting bin:

Meat and bones, dairy products, diseased plants, metals, plastic and glass, animal manures, fat, magazines, large branches, weeds that have seeds or underground stems, bread or cake, sawdust from treated timber.

A range of events are held throughout the week between 5th and 11th May 2014. Events can be viewed, registered and downloaded from the Calendar pages within the website www.compostweek.com.au, where more information is provided.

ENDS.

Notes to Editors

Australians are the third highest waste producers in the world, after Americans and Canadians.

Australians now throw away 4 million tonnes of food every year – up to a quarter of the country's food supplies.

If everyone composted, the total waste going to landfill could decrease by up to a third.



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