

# Small-scale Composting



It's Easy, It's Worth it!



green  
**ACTION**  
centre

# WHAT IS COMPOSTING?

A process of decomposition of organic materials by a community of microorganisms



Organic  
Materials  
Collected



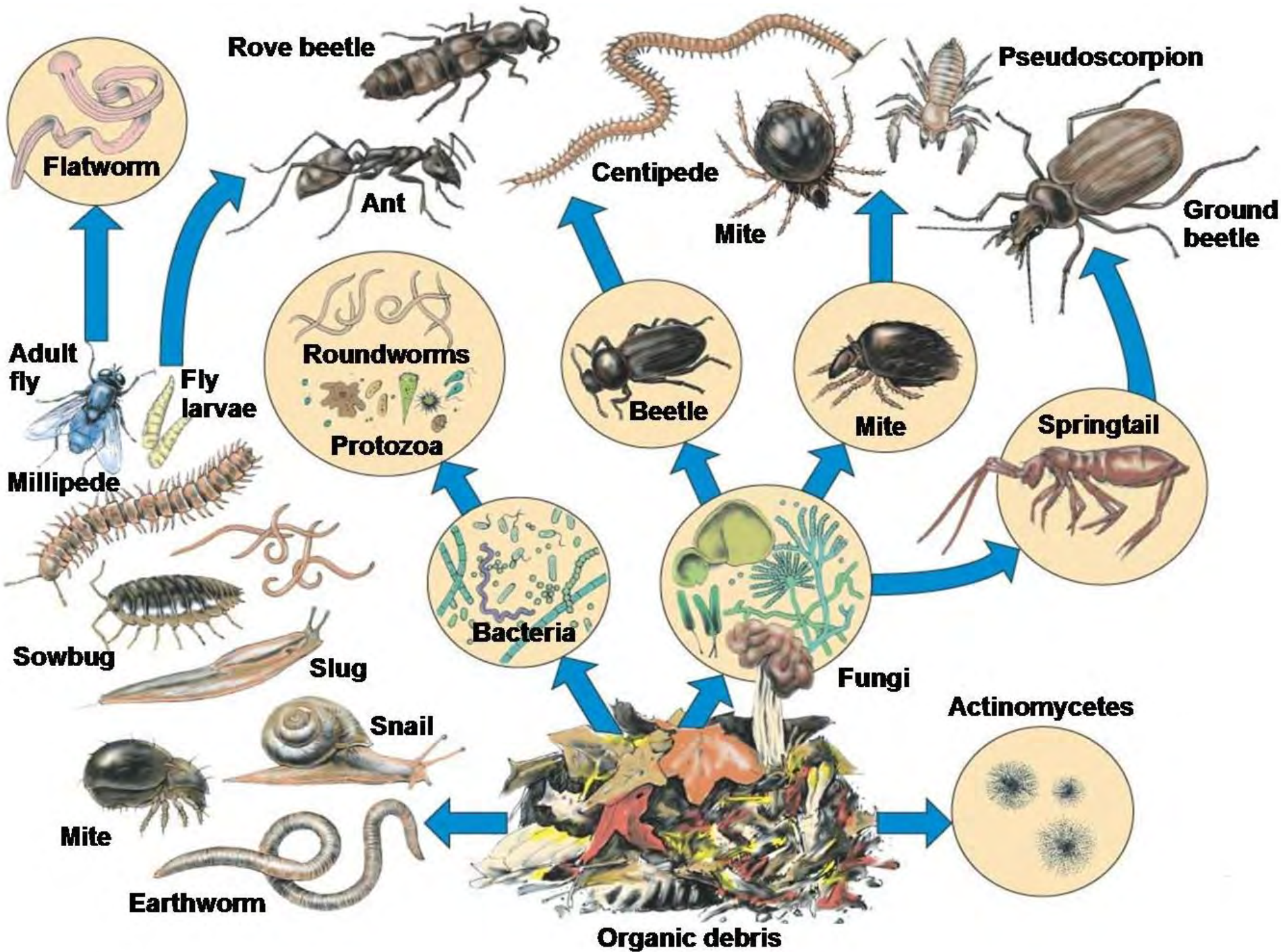
Organics  
break down  
in a bin



Finally, a  
natural soil  
amendment!

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# WHY COMPOST?

*Landfill + food =  
climate change*



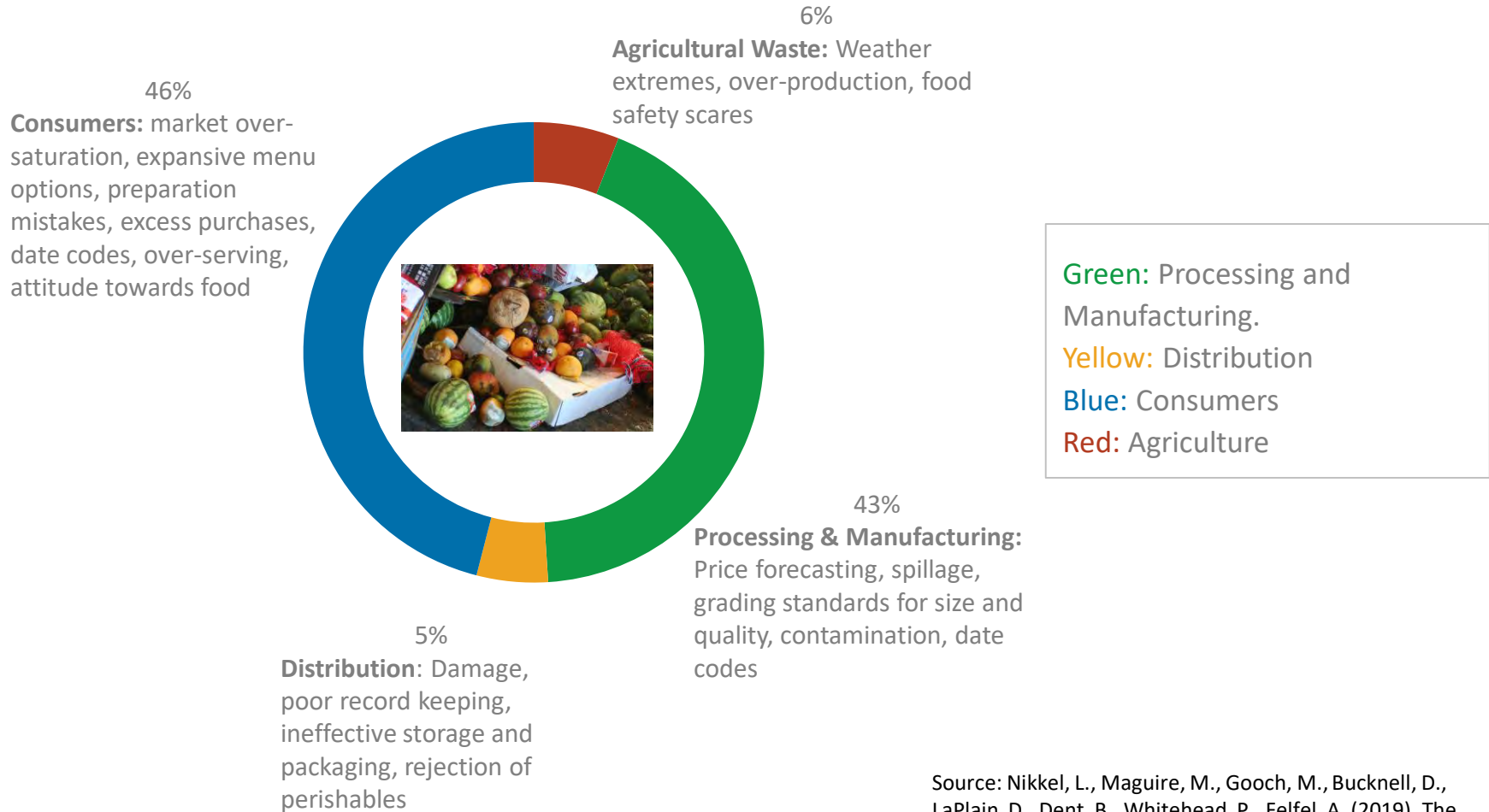


# WHY COMPOST?

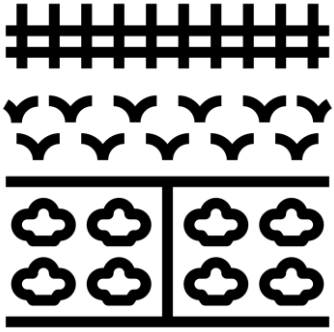


# FOOD WASTE

IN 2019 CANADA'S FOOD WASTE REPRESENTS \$50 BILLION DOLLARS



Source: Nikkel, L., Maguire, M., Gooch, M., Bucknell, D., LaPlain, D., Dent, B., Whitehead, P., Felfel, A. (2019). The Avoidable Crisis of Food Waste: Roadmap; Second Harvest and Value Chain Management International; Ontario, Canada.



Community Garden



Backyard



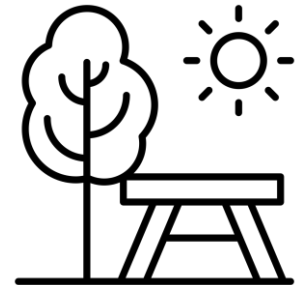
School

## Locations

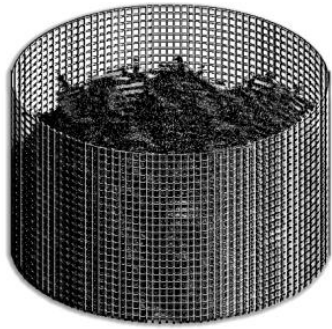
Where do I locate my small-scale compost system?



Multi-household



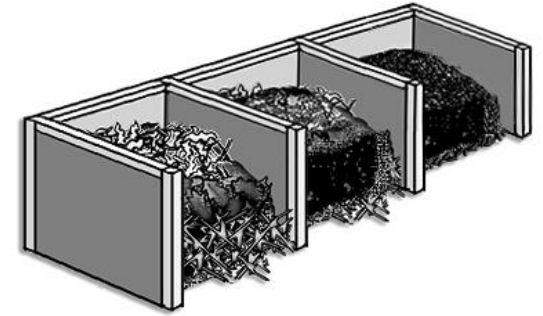
Community Centre



Chicken wire bin



Molded plastic bin

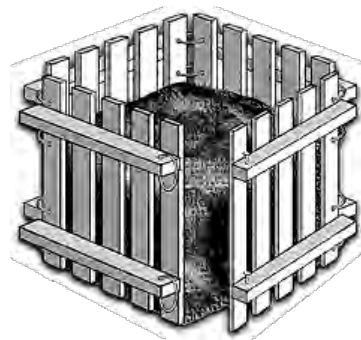


2 or 3 bin system

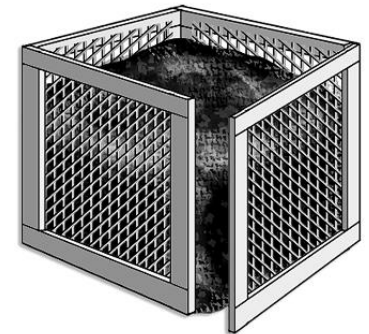
## Choose a bin + location



Tumbler bin



Pallet bin



Wood and wire bin





# Get some tools

A collection pail and a turning tool



# WHAT CAN I COMPOST?

## GREENS (N)

- Fruit and veggie scraps (cooked or raw)
- Coffee grounds & tea leaves/bags
- Garden waste
- Fresh weeds (no seeds)
- Fresh grass clippings



## BROWNS (C)

- Leaves
- Straw
- Sawdust
- Small woodchips
- Dried grass
- Dried weeds (no seeds)
- Shredded paper, napkins, facial tissue

## Don't forget:

- Eggshells
- Wood ash
- Plain rice
- Plain pasta
- Bread
- Hair
- Wool
- Linen
- Cotton
- Dryer lint





# DO NOT COMPOST

## Foods to avoid:

- Meat and meat products (bones, fish, poultry, beef, etc.)
- Whole Eggs
- Dairy products
- Oily Foods

## Other products

- Pet waste (dog + cat)
- Diseased plants
- Compostable “plastics”
- Metals
- Synthetic material





# BALANCE IS KEY!

## GREENS (N)

- Wet
- Always cover greens with browns.
- Too much = odours and possible pests



## BROWNS (C)

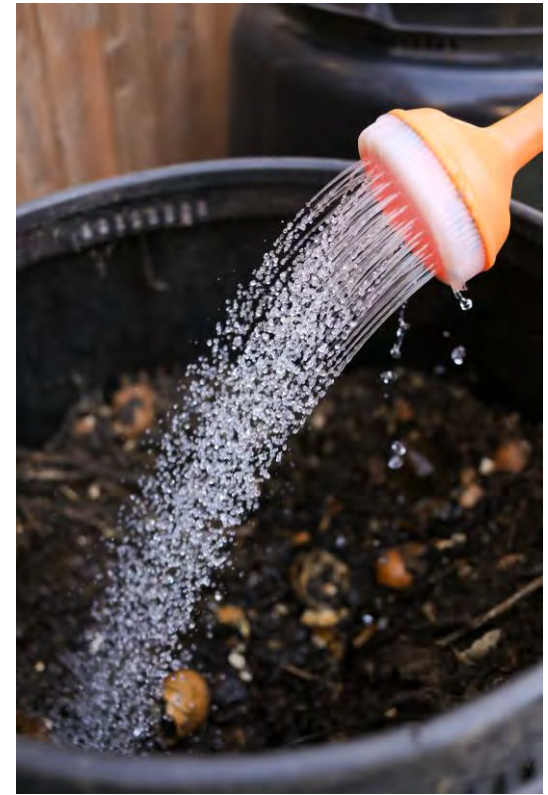
- Dry
- Put 2 to 3 times as much “browns” than “greens”
- Too much = slow activity



# WATER & AIR

## Water

- Like a wrung out sponge
- Greens add moisture
- Too wet = odours



## Air

- Needed for aerobic decomposition
- Turn, poke or stir
- Too often = loss of heat = slow decomposition



# HARVESTING

When is compost finished?

- Smells earthy
- The pile doesn't heat up if water or air are added
- There may be some larger uncomposted pieces (e.g. corn cob)



Sift and Add to Soil

- Sift any un-composted pieces
- Mix with soil, in fall if possible



# COMPOSTING IN WINTER

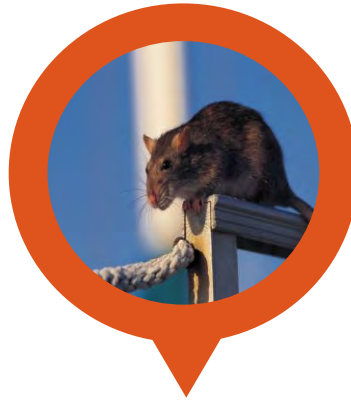
- Keep adding!
- Decomposition can stop
- Layering not necessary
- Stockpile
- Compost “burritos”



# WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY BIN?



Slow  
Decomposition



Rodents and  
Raccoons



Odors

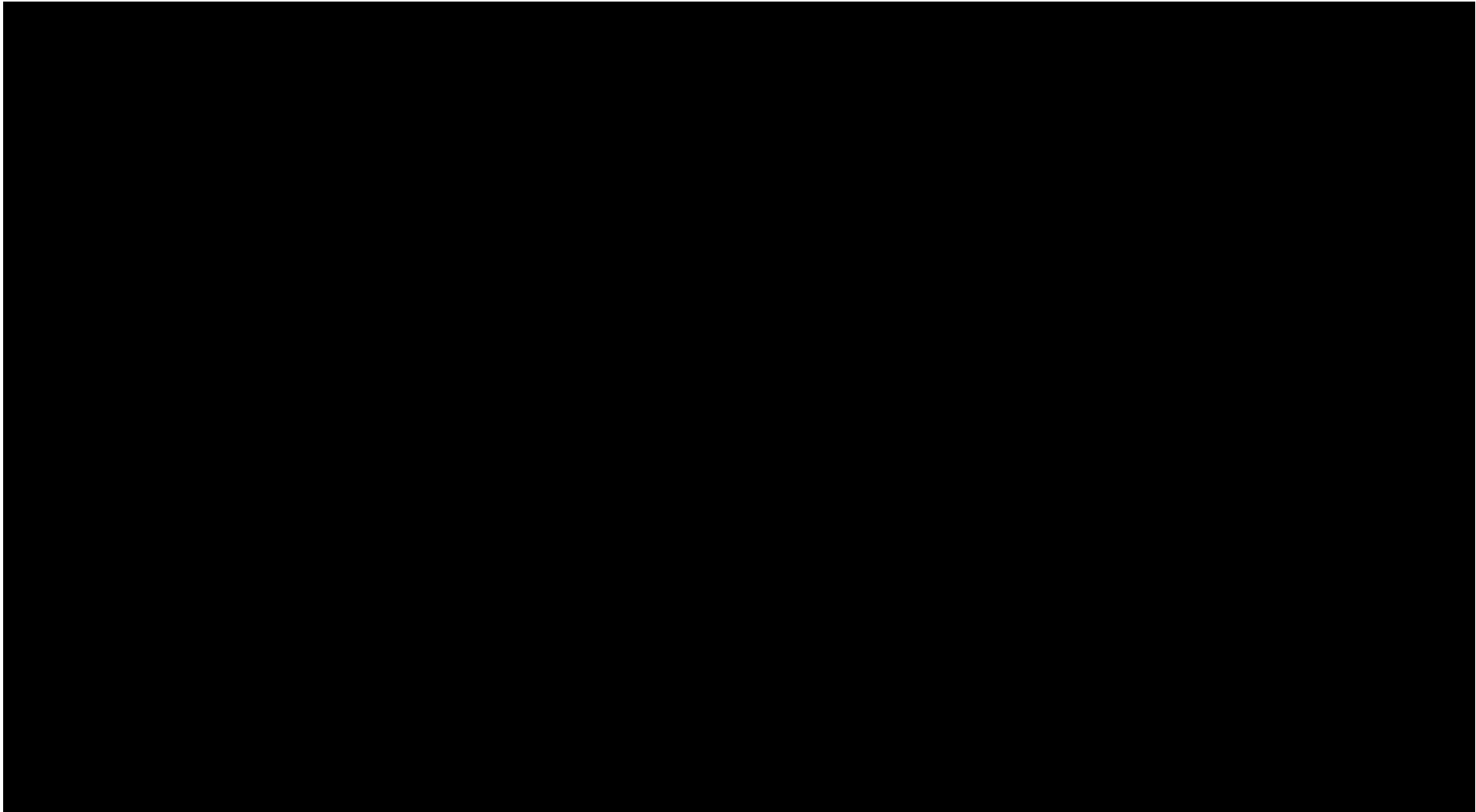


Fruit flies



Wasps

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# Composting – It's Worth It!



- Little time or energy required!
- Free rich fertilizer!
- Less garden watering!
- Reduces waste!
- Reduces GHG's!
- Reduces landfill leachate!

**A win for you and a win for the environment!**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a mound of dark, rich soil. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. The background is a blurred green field.

THANK YOU

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green  
**ACTION**  
centre