



PLANT SCIENCE AND LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

**2014 Master Composter Certification Program
Syllabus**

Program: Five consecutive Saturdays, starting with October 4, 2014.

Locations: The first and fourth classes will be held in the Silver Education Center at the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens, 151 Brookdale Road, Stamford CT 06903 (203-322-6971). Class/workshop on Saturday, October 11 will be held in the Middlesex County Extension Center 1066 Saybrook Road, Haddam CT 06438 (860-345-4511). The third Saturday class will be held at the recycling and transfer station in Fairfield, CT [TBA]. The field trip on the last Saturday will be in East Canaan in NW CT; directions will be given ahead of time in class.

Textbook: The text that will be used is the Rodale Book of Composting, Deborah L. Martin & Grace Gershuny, editors (Rodale Press 1992) [ISBN 0-87857-991-5 paperback], which can be bought new for \$16; but used copies can be readily ordered for little on the internet. Please start your reading assignments as soon as possible. Additional assignments from Cornell and other resources will be handed out prior to the applicable class.

Lunch: Bring your own lunch to the first four classes. You can brownbag your lunch for the fieldtrip or buy a wonderful lunch at the farm's fruit and vegetable market.

CLASS ONE: Saturday, October 4, 2014, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm at the Bartlett

9:30 Introduction & Brief Overview of Program; break for photos

Coordinators: Dawn Pettinelli, UConn Soil Nutrient Analysis Lab, Extension Instructor
Greg Moonie, State Coordinator, UConn Master Composter Program (Master Composter, Advanced Master Gardener)

10:30 Basic Principles of Composting

Lecturer: Dr. George Elliott, UConn Dept. of Plant Science & Landscape Architecture

Reading Assignment: The Rodale Book of Composting pp. 74-165.

12:00 – 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30 Concepts in Compost Chemistry -- Contaminants & Testing

Lecturer: Robert J. Rafka, Ph.D., URI Master Composter & Recycler, URI MG

2:30 Compost tea; Phosphorous Legislation

Lecturer: Dawn Pettinelli

CLASS TWO: Saturday, October 11, 2014, 10:00 am – 3:00 pm at Haddam Extension
(Note: Columbus Day weekend)

Composting with Worms (“Worm Day”)

10:00 Beneficial and Harmful Earthworms, and their impact on the ecosystem

Lecturer: Dr. Joseph Gorres, University of Vermont, Dept. of Plant & Soil Science

12:00 – 12:30 Lunch Break

12:30 Vermicomposting

Lecturer: Carol Quish, UConn Home & Garden Center (MC & AMG)

Reading Assignment: Rodale, pp. 166-178; Cornell Waste Management Institute Manual, pp. 31-37 (copies to be handed out prior to class).

1:30 Worm Bin Building Workshop

Lecturers: Lisa Krall, Connecticut Office of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service & Carol Quish.

CLASS THREE: Saturday, October 18, 2014, 10 am – 3 pm in Fairfield [and/or Bartlett]

Other Types of Composting

10:00 Commercial, Municipal & Farm Composting

Lecturer: Dr. Geoffrey Kuter, Agresource Inc., Amesbury, MA

Reading Assignment: Rodale, pp. 228-261.

11:45 Field trip to town of Fairfield Composting & Recycling Center

12:30 – 1:00 Lunch Break

1:00 Use of compost in the residential landscape; Designing a Compost Recipe & Using Compost Calculators

Lecturer: Dawn Pettinelli

2:00 Composting Structures

Lecturer: Greg Moonie

Reading Assignment: Rodale, pp. 179-202

2:45 Question & Answer Session covering first three classes

CLASS FOUR: Saturday, October 25, 2014, 9:30 – 3:00 pm at the Bartlett

Tips for Educational Events and Final Word on Composting

9:30 How to Teach Composting to the General Public

Lecturer: Tracy Burrell (MC & AMG) & Dawn Pettinelli

Reading Assignment: Cornell, pp. 19-23, 29-30, 32-33, A1-A4 & 79-96.

11:30 How to make and use Power Point and overview of the Program’s standard PPT

Lecturer: Greg Moonie

12:30 – 1:00 Lunch Break

1:00 How to Teach Composting to Children

Lecturer: Todd DuPont, Director of Children’s Education at Bartlett

**2:15 Outreach; UConn Resources (Dawn Pettinelli)
Roundtable Discussion**

CLASS FIVE: Saturday, November 1, 2014, 10 am – 2 pm in East Canaan CT

Field Trip

Freund's Farm and Laurelbrook Farm, East Canaan, CT

Directions will be given in class. [Dress for outdoors; muck boots]

Visit commercial large scale farm composting operations, cow pot manufacture, digester. Lunch provided by Freund's Farm (\$15 or BYO)

Community Outreach Project Requirements: Each master composter intern will be required to complete a minimum of 20 hours of approved community outreach projects in order to qualify for graduation. The projects must be in Connecticut and must include work on at least two separate projects. Details of the types of outreach will be discussed in Class Four. Projects must be completed by September 1, 2015. [After graduation you may work on projects outside CT.]

Graduation: In addition to the two outreach projects totaling at least 20 hours, interns must attend all four of the classes in order to qualify for graduation. Attendance at the fifth week field trip is optional but strongly recommended. Those who miss a class may make it up in a following year. A graduation ceremony will be held in September 2015.



Original Syllabus Developed by Gregory J. Moonie
State Coordinator, UConn Master Composter Program
Master Composter, Advanced Master Gardener