

### **Dry Leaf and garden waste composting**

Dried, fresh leaves and all garden waste can be composted with great ease and efficiency without a great deal of investment.

#### **Materials required**

- An area of land in any corner of the garden of about 6ft by 12 ft or any variation of this.
- Wooden poles (sarve mara) or twigs to make the base of the pile.
- About 100 lts of cow dung.
- About 500-1000 kgs of pure leaves both fresh and dried.
- Jute material –either in metres or onion sacks which can be used to cover the heap of leaves.
- Some large leaves like the coconut tree's branch to be put on the base of the pile.
- time -3 hrs

#### **The methodology**

- Make a stand with sarve poles- the longer ones (approximately 12 ft long) at the bottom and place on top at a distance of 1 ft 6 ft long poles. This is placed on stones or bricks so that the platform is a foot above the ground. This makes a nice grid. Keeping the platform above the ground helps any excess ground water to drain out and also allows for aeration of the heap of leaves. Now on this place either the coconut branches or the larger leaves so as to make a base on which the leaves can be piled.
- The leaves and garden waste is collected in a pile. All the plastic and paper contaminants are removed so that it is pure green waste. It would take 2-3 people to remove the paper and plastic waste in less than 30 minutes (depending on how much contamination is there). The leaves are crushed by stamping on it to break it.
- Make some dilute cow dung slurry – by adding water of about 10 lts to 2 hands full of cow dung in a tub. Dip the leaves in dilute cow dung water and after draining some of the water layer it on the wooden pole stand.
- Keep on layering it one on top of the other so that the pile then reaches a height of 5 ft and so that no more leaves can be piled on it. Cover this pile with a jute cloth and poured some more dilute cow dung water on it. It should now be watered one or twice a day so as to keep the pile moist (this helps the bacteria multiply and convert the heap into compost soon). Cover this pile with gunny cloth so that the heap remains moist.
- Within a few days the pile begins to compact and the leaves turn black and have a wonderful earthy smell.

# Leaf Litter Composting



Collect dry leaves, removing paper and plastic



Crush the leaves by stamping to hasten composting



Make a platform, and place it a foot above the ground



Cover the platform with dry coconut gari



or plaited gari



Make some dilute cowdung slurry



Soak leaves in cowdung, drain and spread evenly on platform



Pile it 4 ft high



Cover it with jute cloth



Water it daily to maintain moisture for composting



Leave it for 45 days



Height of the pile has reduced to half the size



The leaf mulch has become powdery



Healthy earthworms live in the compost



Rich leaf mulch

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