

(NEW) Master Composting Group – eight MGV's took the composting class in Walworth County and created a display that is used at the plant sale; the county fair; farmer's markets; and have also given two workshops

Jefferson County Master Composter's

The Master Composter Training sessions are held every year at various counties throughout Wisconsin. This year Walworth County hosted one of those training sessions. There were seven Jefferson County Master Gardener Association members who took the class on April 9, 2011. The Master Composter program is a train the trainer program that aims to build the capacity of composters to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for composting with others. The JCMGV also had to attend an hour-long Wisconsin teleconference in May, which recapped some of the different ways to teach composting. Each group was asked to give a list of some of the ideas on how they were going to display and hold workshops about composting.

One of the first things the group did was to create a display for use as a stand-alone display at different events plus at the hands-on workshops. They have a tote to demonstrate the size that could be used for a worm compost bin; a compost thermometer; sponges; copies of the handouts; and smaller sized versions of compost bins. The tote doubles as a carrier for the handouts and other display items.

The first display was set up at the Jefferson County Master Gardener plant sale in early May. This was available to those shopping for plants that might have an interest in learning more about composting. A member who attended the Master Composter training session was available to answer questions.

Hoard Museum in Fort Atkinson hosted a composting presentation in early June. This hour-long presentation was open to the public. There were nine people who attended the presentation, some who were composting and wanted additional information and others who were interested in starting a compost bin for the first time.

The composting display was set up in the Plants and Crops area at the Jefferson County Fair in July. The members of the group added a 1-foot high variation of a three-bin compost system. The display included three samples of brown (shredded paper, dried leaves, straw) plus a couple different samples of green (grass clipping, coffee grounds, eggshells) to help demonstrate some of the various items that can go into a compost bin. There was a sign-up sheet for those interested in attending a "how-to" composting workshop in the future. There were two members of the Master Composter group available to answer questions on Friday afternoon.

A "how-to" workshop was held on August 11 at the Rock River Community Garden in Jefferson. There are two three-bin compost systems – one was already filled with composting materials to demonstrate how it works; the other was used to demonstrate how-to create the compost bin. This was open to the public and personal invitations were sent to those that signed up at the fair and the members of the community garden itself. A total of eleven people came to the workshop.

A future compost workshop is planned for the spring of 2012 at a soon to be developed school garden. The participants will include the school children involved with the garden and any other interested parties or members of the community.

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