

**International Compost Awareness Week: May 2—8, 2010**

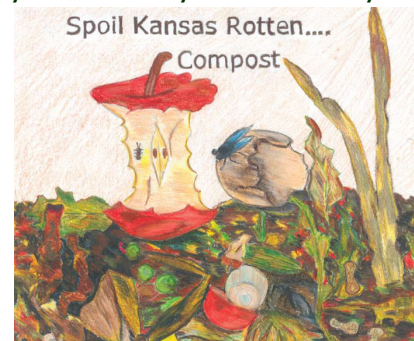
---

**If you are a gardener**, you know that May is a good time to be outside working in your yard. International Compost Awareness Week was the first week in May and what better time to consider adding compost as a valuable asset to your gardening efforts?

**According to the US Composting Council**, compost is an excellent source of fertilizer for all types of plants. Aside from providing nutrients and stimulating healthy root development, the addition of compost also improves soil texture, aeration, and water retention.

**Simply stated**, composting is creating an environment for organic materials to breakdown through the correct combination of "ingredients". This combination of ingredients includes: air, moisture, brown materials (such as straw, hay, paper, sticks) and green materials (such as leaves, lawn clippings and kitchen scraps). The result is the dark and rich essential to gardening, humus. For information on how to utilize compost in your garden, visit the [US Composting Council](http://US Composting Council).

**Compost** can be readily purchased at a garden center but why not make your own? By making your own compost, you can redirect some of the waste generated at your home from the landfill to your garden. Remember, compost is an excellent way to dispose of your vegetable kitchen scraps, grass clippings, and yard waste. For more information on how to start composting, visit [compost-education.com](http://compost-education.com). If you do not want to take on a composting project at your home but do not want your waste going to the landfill either, visit [kansasrecycles.org](http://kansasrecycles.org) to determine if a composting facility is in your area.



**Here are some other ideas** to minimize your environmental impact this gardening season. Consider keeping your grass longer which will discourage weeds and lessen the need for applying insecticides and herbicides. Start collecting rainwater by setting up a rain barrel. A rain barrel is an inexpensive and easy way to capture mineral- and chlorine-free water for watering your lawn and garden. Be sure to follow the instructions at [Mid-America Regional Council](http://Mid-America Regional Council) to ensure that your rain barrel is not providing habitat for mosquitos. Finally, do your watering early in the day to avoid evaporation. For in-depth gardening information specific to Kansas, visit the Kansas [Master Gardeners](http://Master Gardeners).



**Get Caught !**



