



Organic gardens partners with regional Wal-Marts for compost

SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE • September 5, 2010

CHILLICOTHE -- Marvin's Organic Gardens has partnered with Future Organics, Inc. to receive food and plant waste for composting from 160 Wal-Mart stores between the Columbus and Cincinnati areas, including the one in Chillicothe.

Future Organics Inc., a privately held company working with Wal-Mart stores in Ohio and Michigan, is delivering food bins designed for short-term storage of food waste to Wal-Mart stores, collecting almost 3 tons of discarded scraps weekly. The raw materials are collected from six to eight stores each day in truckloads of up to 22 tons to be delivered to Marvin's Organic Gardens 1,000,000-yard compost pile.

The waste from Wal-Mart stores includes spoiled and damaged food scraps, food preparation materials and plants from the gardening center. Wal-Mart benefits from the partnership as compost disposal fees at Marvin's Organic Gardens are lower than landfills. The landfill diversion of composting is beneficial for its carbon footprint and eliminates greenhouse gases, such as methane, that are produced in landfills.

It will also increase the nutrient diversity and microorganism species in the compost mound at Marvin's Organic Gardens.

"The nutrient rich homemade compost we are able to produce from the food waste supplied from Wal-Mart is the best way to promote healthy lawns and gardens and grow the best tasting fruits and vegetables possible," said Wes Duren, owner of Marvin's Organic Gardens.

All recycled materials are commingled and piled in long mounds and then aged for up to a decade. The piles are turned at least four times per year in order to expedite decomposition, reduce nutrient loss and to promote the highest quality weed-free compost available.

Generally, any plant-based item can be composted in nature's process of recycling decomposed organic materials. Most compost takes three to five years to age to purchasing quality; some compost at Marvin's Organic Gardens is aged more than 12 years.