



Is Brown the New Green? The Cincinnati Zoo Composts Animal Waste



The Cincinnati Zoo, already America's greenest zoo, is taking its eco-efforts a step further. Joining forces with Marvin's Organic Gardens in Lebanon, Ohio, the zoo is working with a \$35,000 grant from the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District to start composting all of its animal waste (roughly 1 million pounds per year) instead of shipping it off to the landfill.

Manure makes great compost material because it nourishes a wide diversity of soil organisms. Instead of increasing methane emissions and filling up landfill space, the zoo's formerly cumbersome animal droppings will now be diverted to the organic recycling center, where they'll be composted into large mounds and regulated to reduce nutrient loss and decompose faster. Over time, Marvin's Organic Gardens hopes to create good enough compost not only to use on the zoo's gardens but to sell.

--Shirley Mak