

Weekly Newsletter
from Agresource Inc.
for turning waste into
opportunity

Quick C:N Reference Guide

- Dry leaves: 60:1
- Straw: 80:1
- Cardboard: 350:1
 - Grass clippings: 20:1
 - Fruit/veg scraps: 15:1
- Manure: 15-30:1

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"The environment is where we all meet; where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share." — Lady Bird Johnson

The Compost Connection: Understanding Carbon to Nitrogen Ratio

What is the Carbon to Nitrogen (C:N) Ratio?

The carbon-to-nitrogen ratio (C:N ratio) is the balance of carbon-rich (browns) and nitrogen-rich (greens) materials in compost. This balance is crucial for efficient decomposition and nutrient-rich compost.

- Carbon (Browns): Dry leaves, straw, cardboard, sawdust, wood chips
- Nitrogen (Greens): Food scraps, grass clippings, biosolids, manure

Why Does the C:N Ratio Matter?

Microorganisms in compost need carbon for energy and nitrogen for protein synthesis. The ideal C:N ratio for composting is about 30:1 (30 parts carbon to 1 part nitrogen). If the ratio is off:

- Too much carbon: Decomposition slows down
- Too much nitrogen: Can cause odor and excess moisture

How to Achieve the Right Balance

1. Layer Materials – Alternate greens and browns in layers.
2. Mix Regularly – Turn the pile to aerate and distribute nutrients.
3. Monitor Moisture – Compost should be damp, like a wrung-out sponge.

Compost Success Tips

- Chop large items for faster breakdown.
- Avoid dairy, meat, and oily foods to prevent pests.
- In cold weather, insulate the pile to maintain heat.

By maintaining the right C:N ratio, you'll create nutrient-rich compost that improves soil health and supports a sustainable environment!