

Turning Garbage into Gold

(Continued from pg. 16)

RECYCLING MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE

An increasing number of Canadian companies are getting into plastics recycling, devoting their resources and creative energies to turning discarded plastics - everything from used pop and detergent bottles to cups and cutlery - back into useful products.

"The Canadian plastics industry realizes that there's gold in garbage," says Dr. Edgemont. "Plastics manufacturers are developing innovative uses for recycled plastic, and plastics recycling facilities are springing up across the country. Plastics are now being recycled into everything from railway ties, to carpeting, boat hulls, sports equipment, appliance handles,

insulation and construction and agricultural materials. And now used plastic bottles and containers are being made right back into new ones!"

CLOSING THE LOOP

One promising plastics manufacturing development is closed-loop recycling, which enables manufacturers to recycle plastics right back into identical products.

In November 1990, Twinpak Inc., of Montreal, announced an important breakthrough in the recycling of PET bottles. It's a chemical process that will convert PET bottles back to their original compounds, meaning that for the first time ever, recycled PET bottles will be turned right back into new plastic PET bottles.

From time to time, add a shovelful of to supply microbes and bacteria, and add a sprinkling or two of fertilizer to as a catalyst. Construct the pile as quickly as possible; if your waste material is added a little at a time, they will decompose without building up enough to make humus.

Keep in mind that the smaller the particles, the faster and easier the decomposition will take place. Large twigs and limbs of woody plants should be reduced to a smaller form before being placed on the pile.

Turning the Pile

Turning the pile frequently will speed the composting process greatly. Simply dig, turning the pile means using an old-fashioned pitchfork to mix the raw material on the outer sides with the hot,

"cooking" compost in the centre.

As the organic matter decomposes, the temperature inside the pile will rise. You'll know when the decaying matter has run out of oxygen and needs to be turned because the temperature inside will drop noticeably. After each turning, the pile should reach peak temperatures within a few days before cooling again.

The extra effort involved in frequent turnings can pay off handsomely. A well-constructed pile, turned with a fork every three days, can produce usable compost in as little as 12 days.

When the pile is half its original size and its temperature stabilizes no matter how much you turn it, your finished compost is ready to go into your garden.

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1. Expand the curbside Blue Box for residential, and Blue Bags and Blue Bins programs for apartments.
2. Institute Fire Paper recovery program in schools and offices.
3. Promote the use of diverted materials in municipal construction, eg. Use of glassphalt, clean demolition rubble.
4. Institute appropriate policies to procure materials with recycled content (GIPPER).
5. Education on commercial, industrial recycling.
6. Diversion of organic wastes - ie. wet/dry process or in-vessel composting.

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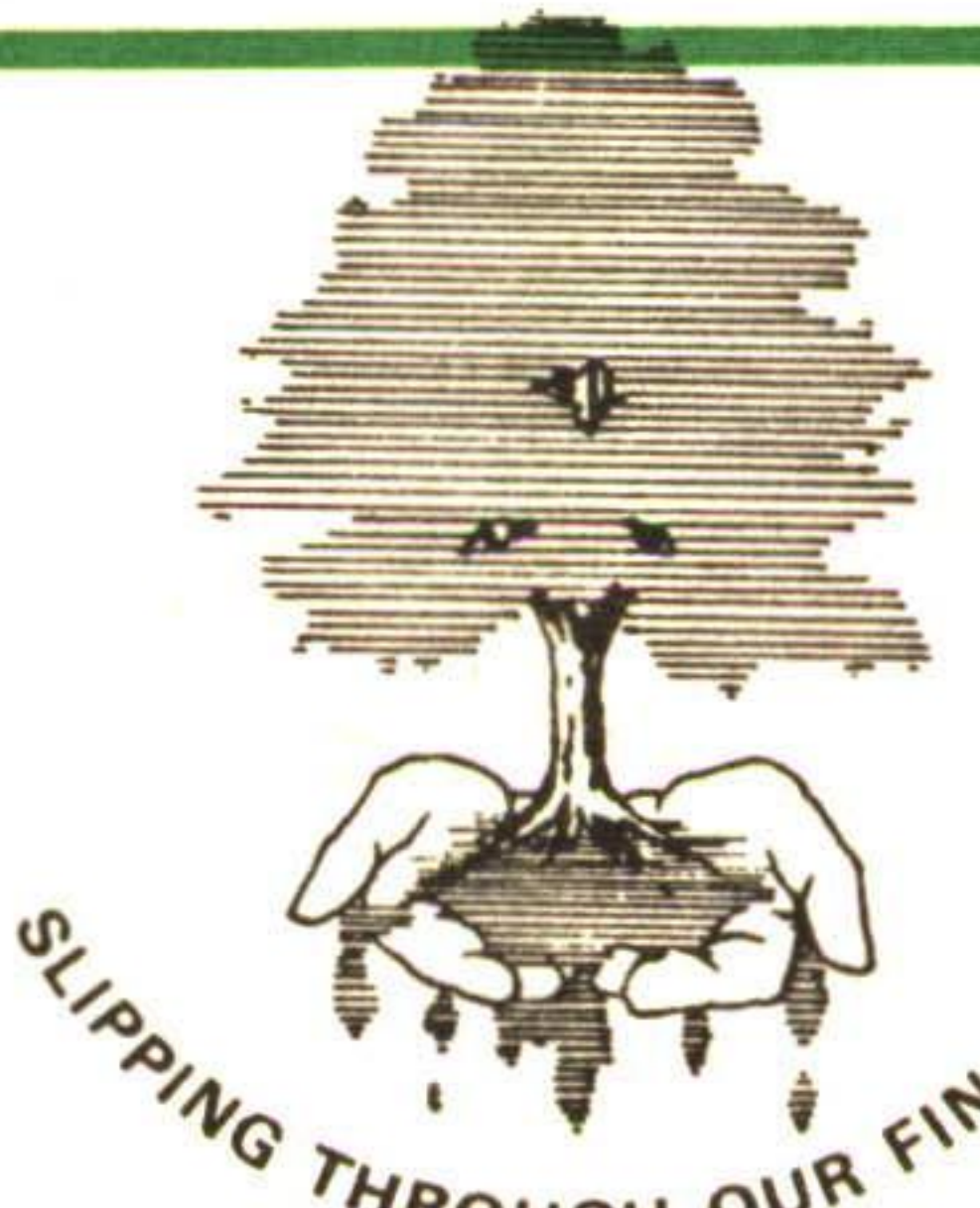
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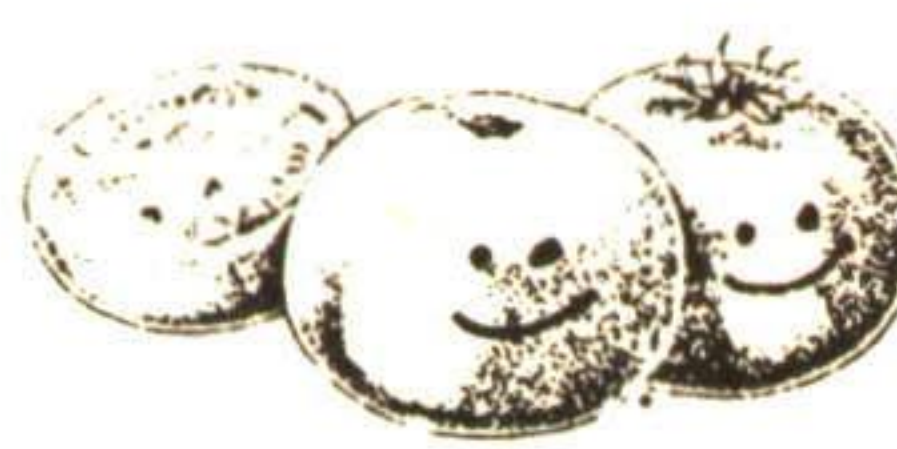


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