

Home & Garden

Animal manure, leaf and yard waste all make good composting material

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ents needed for your lawn or plants' growth. Recent university research has also proven that lawns treated with compost are better able to resist disease. In the future, golf greens will most likely be enriched with a compost component to help reduce disease problems and fungicide usage.

Although good compost does not contain enough of the essential plant nutrients of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium to act as a fertilizer, it does contain favorable concentrations of most nutrients and at values above those of other organic materials like peat moss.

Sources of raw materials also impact the quality of the compost. If nitrogen-rich raw materials (such as grass clippings and manure) are used as the ingredients,

then nitrogen levels of the resulting compost may be higher than if the compost is produced from carbon sources such as woody materials.

Compost should be considered a soil amendment, not a fertilizer. Immature compost can actually rob the soil of nutrients, like nitrogen, during the decomposition process.

Microorganisms use existing soil nitrogen as fuel while they are converting the compost and this temporary dip in nitrogen levels in the soil could be detrimental to your plants.

Commercially composted materials have been piled in rows and allowed to reach internal temperatures of 60°C. This treatment kills

harmful bacteria and weed seeds, but a substantial number of beneficial bacteria will survive and remain in the compost.

Three excellent sources of compost are:

1. animal manure
2. compost from licensed compost

facilities (leaf and yard waste) 3. compost from backyard composters (kitchen product waste, leaf and yard waste)

By Rod Kidnie from The Fertilizer Institute of Ontario



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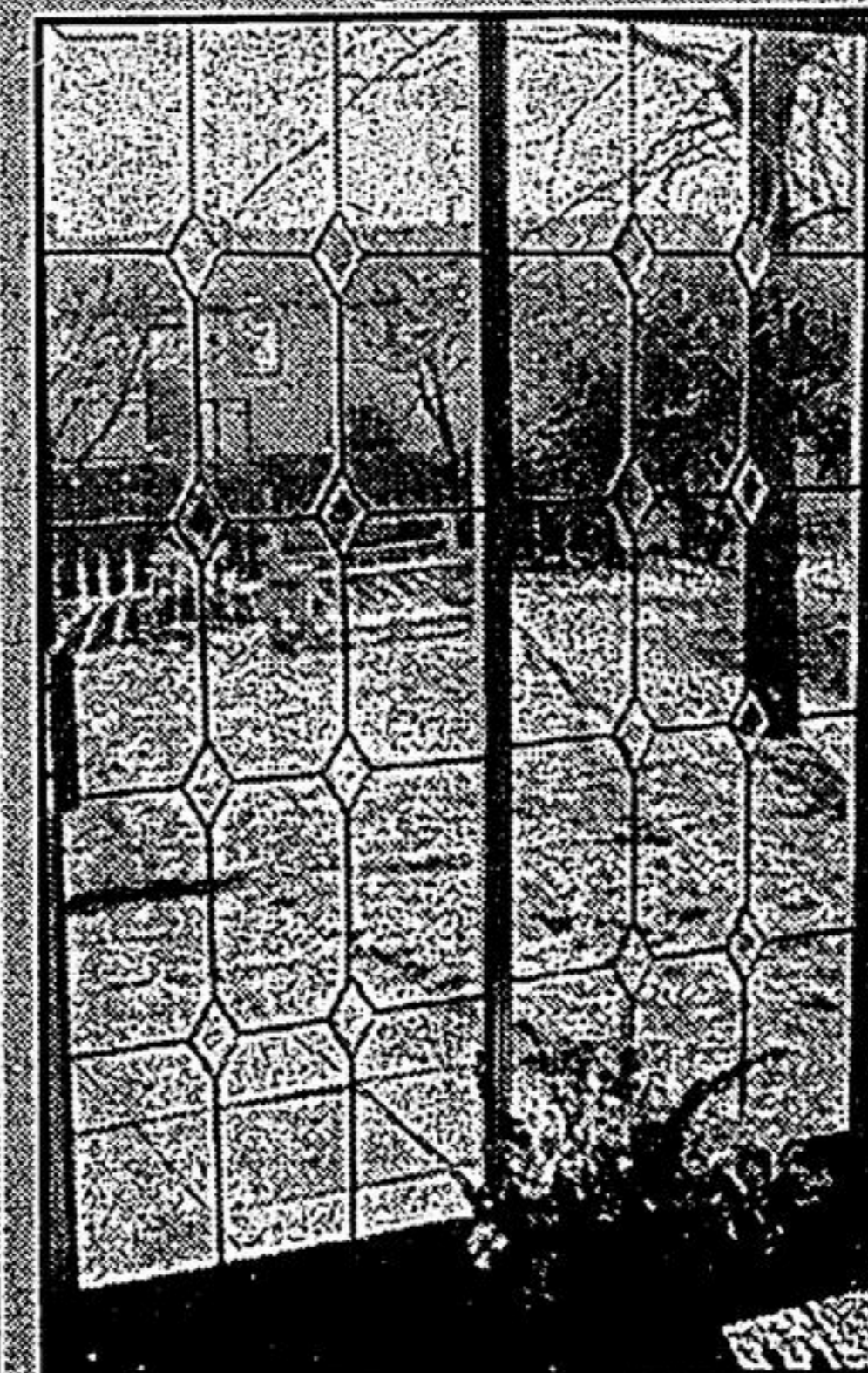
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