

As with any compost product wear gloves when handling and wash hands after use

Congratulations, this delivery of compost has been produced locally at the LondonWaste EcoPark in London N18 and has reduced the use of landfill sites and the creation of waste. We want to make sure that this compost is right for your needs. This fact sheet will help you make an informed choice about how and when you use this product.

How is it made?

EcoPark Compost is made using In-Vessel Composting technology. Feedstock is food and garden waste collected from households in and around North London. The feedstock is loaded into vessels (tunnels) where it remains for up to twenty-one days. Naturally occurring bacteria is produced and composting begins. During this time the batches of material achieve a minimum temperature of 60°C for forty-eight hours. The compost is then allowed to mature for up to six weeks before being delivered to customers.

Are chemicals used in the composting process?

No chemicals are added. We introduce a compost activator made of proteins, minerals, and compounds at the beginning of the process. It enhances the process and ensures that we have a broad range of bacteria and fungi to break the feedstock down.

Is it certified to any standard?

There is a Publically accepted Standard (PAS) and Quality Protocol for compost which supported by DEFRA and the Soil Association have been developed by a number of organisations; the Association for Organics Recycling (AFOR), the British Standards Institute and the Waste and Resources Action Plan (WRAP). EcoPark Compost is produced to the BSI PAS 100:2011 and is certified to the Quality Protocol standard. For further information on PAS100 please see <http://www.wrap.org.uk> and DEFRA.

Is it ready to use?

Compost is ready to use when the temperature in the pile drops to that of the surrounding air.

- It will smell earthy
- It will look like dark soil
- It will have a woody texture

Every effort has been made to ensure this product contains no sharp fragments, or regenerative plant parts, however we cannot guarantee they will never be present. As with any compost product please wear gloves and wash your hands after use.

Getting the right mix

It is great as mulch on soil around plants. It helps to retain moisture, prevents weeds and helps minimise soil erosion.

- Plant Mulch: Apply around the stem to a depth of 25 – 75mm
- Garden beds: Apply to a depth of 50 - 75mm and work into the soil to a depth of 150 mm. Water well
- Trees and shrubs: Blend the compost with soil in a ratio of one part compost to two parts soil
- Potting: mix one part compost to three parts soil
- General: EcoPark compost is not suitable for acid loving plants (e.g. Azalea, Camellia, some Conifers & Rhododendron).

What's all this about a Carbon to Nitrogen ratio?

Microorganisms decompose organic material. Decomposition is greatly increased when the Carbon and Nitrogen values are balanced. Microorganisms need the right amount of Carbon for energy and Nitrogen for protein production. The best way to produce good compost is to maintain the C:N ratio. If the ratio is too high (too much Carbon ie dry brown stuff) decomposition is slow. If the ratio is too low (too much Nitrogen ie moist green stuff) it may be anaerobic. Our C:N ratio is 13:1. Our compost pile therefore has 13 times as much Carbon as Nitrogen.

What are average pH levels?

The pH is usually around 7.5

Are nutrient levels measured?

Yes they are and their values depend on the type of feedstock composted. Our feedstock remains an excellent source of slow release nitrogen, phosphate, potassium, sulphur and magnesium as our feedstock is food and garden waste (grass clippings, plants etc) from North London households. These nutrients will encourage healthy plant growth. Please see table below showing mean values.

Nutrient:	kg/t	Nutrient uses
Nitrogen (N)	13.86	(N) required for healthy stems and leaves. Large quantities are needed for vegetative growth, but too much will cause soft leafy plants which are vulnerable to pests and frost, and will delay flowering.
Phosphate (P)	4.81	(P) needed for healthy roots, strong stems and quality crops. It is needed to establish seedlings in seedbeds; older plants need less. It helps ripen fruit - too little will slow this process.
Potassium (K)	10.36	(K) required for healthy leaves, flowers and fruit, also makes plants winter-hardy and improves disease resistance and maintaining water balance.
Magnesium (Mg)	3.48	(Mg) required in small quantities for photosynthesis.
Sulphur (S)	4.68	(S) forms part of all proteins, activates enzymes.
Carbon to Nitrogen ratio C:N ratio	13:1	(C) required as an energy source for microorganisms to break down the organic matter. (N) is also necessary for genetic material and cell structure

How do nutrient levels compare to other composts or manures?

	Total Nitrogen (kg/t)	Total Phosphate (kg/t)	Total Potassium (kg/t)	Total Sulphur (kg/t)	Total Magnesium (kg/t)
EcoPark Compost	13.86	4.81	10.36	4.68	3.48
Cattle farmyard manure	6.00	3.20	8.00	2.40	1.80
Pig farmyard manure	7.00	6.00	8.00	3.40	1.80
Green compost	7.50	3.00	5.50	2.60	3.40

Note: Figures for EcoPark Compost are typical values based on our most recent analyses. The 'standard' figures for the other organic manures have been taken from Defra's Fertiliser manual 2010 (RB209) 8th edition and the corresponding PLANET version 3 software.

The Product Despatch Information Sheet is available to view via your allotment secretary. If you would like to see how this compost is made please email recycling@londonwaste.co.uk or make arrangements via your allotment secretary.