

Waste Wisdoms

Second edition

WINTER 2024 - ISSUE 6

Welcome to the final issue of the 2nd edition, thanks to funding from Sustainability Victoria for the Kensington Waste Wisdoms Program. We focus on Composting supporting Regeneration, the third principle of the Circular Economy. We feature two local composters, our community compost milestones and their benefits. Plus, this issue's giveaway and more.



COMMUNITY COMPOSTING - A CIRCULAR WAY OUT OF WASTE

Our Kensington Community has for nearly a decade been creating local facilities to process our food waste rather than sending it off to landfill. The green bins or FOGO system is an alternative but many advocate for local composting solutions because they are better for the neighbourhood and the planet. The resource created at the end of the process of composting is called compost. Compost is nutrient rich, and is not packaged and transported around, but remains in the neighbourhood, supporting local community gardens and food growing.

WHY COMMUNITY COMPOSTING IS A BETTER NEIGHBOURHOOD WASTE SYSTEM

- No trucks using fossil fuels are needed to transport our food waste to an outlying factory
- No need for factories fueled by fossil fuels and built of mined resources to process our organic food waste – nature does it
- Reduces the use of green plastic bins and bags for FOGO systems - these eventually become microplastics

- Reduces the need to maintain your own compost bin
- We generate our own nutrient-rich compost from food waste for use by us in our own gardens for free
- We reduce our carbon footprint and greenhouse gases

THE MORE FERTILE THE SOIL, THE LESS WATER YOU NEED, THE MORE PLANTS YOU GROW, THE MORE CARBON YOU SINK.

With help from various local and state funding programs, we have established 6 compost hubs with another one planned this year. When at full capacity, we estimate these will deliver 7m3 of compost per month.

Community Composting Milestones:

- **2016** Kensington Street Composting set up and supported by many local volunteers, groups and community organisations
- **2018** Kensington Town Hall Compost Hub launched – consists of 3 bays managed by local volunteers
- **2021** Compost Hub (3 bays) installed at The Venny – Kensington Adventure Playground

- Compost Hub (3 bays) installed at Kensington Community Child Care Cooperative
- Compost Hub (4 bays) installed at Kensington Community Food Forest, 56-70 Derby St, Kensington Estate
- **2023** Kensington Community Waste Wisdoms Program successful in receiving funds from Sustainability Victoria to deliver:
- Compost Hub (3 bays) installed at 76 McCracken St, Christ Church
- Compost Hub (3 bays) installed at 78 Clifford Terrace on the Unison-managed Kensington Estate
- Compost Hub worker employed
- Compost information sessions
- **2024** Kensington Circular Economy Precinct Community Project group forms and successful in receiving funds to:
- Employ a worker to manage Kensington's 6 Compost Hubs for 26 weeks
- Build a Compost Hub (3 bays) at Kensington Community High School, making a total of 7 in Kensington
- Train a local resource to manage the Food Forest and 78 Clifford Terrace Compost Hubs
- Plan an education outreach program

**Want to get involved? Email
Esther at Kensington
Neighbourhood House:
esther.s@kenhouse.org.au**



Meet Kensington's Compost Workers, Dave and Luka

The Kensington Estate has two community compost hubs, one at the Kensington Food Forest, 56-70 Derby St and a new addition at the rear of 78 Clifford Terrace.

Through various grants we have paid compost workers Dave and Luka to manage the processing of our Compost Hubs. Their work includes weekly checks on temperature, moisture, compaction, odour, biological activity, collecting and adding browns (carbon) inputs, compost turning, distribution of compost when ready for community gardens and tracking data.

Dave has been developing compost expertise over the years. He is on the Kensington Townhall Compost Committee as well as managing their Community Compost Hub behind the Townhall. In addition, Dave designed and built the Kensington Estate's first Community Compost Hub (4 bays) in 2021. He continues to manage and support both Compost Hubs on the Estate.

Dave, why do you love composting?

"Composting is a way that as one person you can change the world with your own hands by using food and garden waste that was previously discarded and turning it into a valuable resource for the community to allow us to grow food locally."

Luka came to Australia from Sudan in 2004 and has been living in Kensington for the last three years. His family were farmers so having the opportunity to work outdoors learning about composting systems has brought back memories and a passion for working on the land. Luka has been learning and helping to manage our Community Compost Hubs with Dave this year.

Luka, why are you interested in learning about composting?

"Compost is like the stomach in humans, you feed it to make everything grow. Compost is great food for the plants and the soil. It's a natural fertiliser and puts goodness back into the environment."

Compostable Plastics ARE NOT compostable in our compost systems. They are still PLASTICS - produced from a combination of materials including petrochemicals and only breaking down in extreme heat. It's better NOT TO USE because we are still putting plastics back into the environment.

Kensington's community composts are getting some extra attention these next few months. Student researchers from Praxis Research and RMIT, are working with the community to explore how community composting can improve Kensington's social and environmental wellbeing and how they compare with Council's kerbside FOGO collections or landfill disposal.

Whether you compost or not, use the community compost hubs or prefer Council's green FOGO bins, we want to hear from you. Please answer our survey on your composting experience, so we can support a community compost network that's responsive and connected to current community preferences.



Find the survey here:
<https://bit.ly/3wUnqAi>
or scan the QR code.

GIVEAWAY

Come to Unison's office for a free kitchen compost caddy. Limited availability.

Contact us at the Unison Housing office:
42 Derby St, Kensington
9371 2000 | dwilson@unison.org.au

Contributors: Deb Wilson, Anne Douglas, Jacqueline van Heerden

We acknowledge and respect the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work and deliver our services.