

## Composting Principles and Practices SOCR 343

### Catalog Statement

Fundamentals of compost production, use and regulation will be presented through lectures, fieldwork and a fieldtrip.

### Course Format

This course will meet for 1 two-hour session per week for 8 weeks and students will be required to participate in lecture, lab and fieldtrip components.

### Course Objectives

Students enrolled in this course will:

- 1) Develop an understanding of the role of compost and nutrient cycling in a sustainable agricultural system.
- 2) Become familiar with the means by which compost is produced, classified, used, and regulated.
- 3) Experience hands-on learning exercises through field work and a fieldtrip.
- 4) Examine current compost research in scientific journals.

### Course Specifics

Instructor: Adriane (Addy) Elliott  
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Email: [Adriane.Elliott@ColoState.edu](mailto:Adriane.Elliott@ColoState.edu) **(BEST WAY TO REACH ME!)**

**Suggested (not required)** Textbook: On-Farm Composting Handbook. 1992. Robert Rynk (ed.), Northeast Regional Agricultural Engineering Service, Ithaca, NY.

Other readings: Distributed in class.

Prerequisites: SOCR 240 Introduction to Soil Science

Grading:	Take home exams (2):	90 points each =	180 points
	Homework (2):	20 points each =	60 points
	Final project (1):	40 points =	40 points
	Class participation:	20 points =	<u>20 points</u>
			<b>300 points total</b>

## Course Outline

<b>Week</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>
1	Oct. 15	Review Syllabus Compost: The big picture and NOP Definitions, Carbon and Nitrogen cycles, Play the nitrogen game
2	Oct. 22	Make Class Compost Piles (meet at PERC- 613 W. Lake St.) <b>Homework #1: Assign data collection and management days/times (observation sheets due to Addy by Dec. 1st)</b>
3	Oct. 29	Understanding Different Compost Systems, Compost Microbiology and Compostable 'Plastics' <b>Take Home Exam #1 distributed (due next week)</b>
4	Nov. 5	Field Trip - Vermicompost <b>Take Home Exam #1 DUE TODAY</b> <b>Assign Final Presentation today</b>
5	Nov. 12	Field Trip – Earth Tub and Earth Flow (Solvita Test Demo) <b>Homework #2: Read assigned articles/ write 3 page discovery essay about something you learned/thought about for the first time after completing the readings.</b>
6	Nov. 19	Compost Quality Measurements, Interpretation, Use and Rates <b>Take Home Exam # 2 distributed (due next week)</b>
7	Dec. 3	Environmental Assessments for Compost Site Determination / State Regulations (CO Dept. of Ag. and CO Dept. of Public Health & Environ.) Discuss class compost piles <b>Take Home Exam # 2 DUE DEC. 1</b>
8	Dec. 10	<b>Student presentations</b>