

Waste to wonderful

Bokashi

Kitchen scraps and garden waste make up a third of household waste. In landfill organic waste releases methane, a major greenhouse gas. Running a bokashi bucket at home is a great solution, particularly if you don't have space to compost (and if you don't have a garden you can give your bokashi scraps away to local composters through sharewaste.org.nz).

Bokashi originated in Japan. It uses a bran-based mix inoculated with 'effective micro-organisms' (EM) which, when layered with food scraps, helps process them into a nutrient rich material that can then be dug into the garden or mixed into compost. Bokashi can help transform your garden soil into a rich, fertile growing medium for your vegetables and plants.

Bokashi is a double bucket system which can fit easily under worktops. The magic ingredient is the EM, which is sprinkled on top of food scraps each time you put them in. You would usually have a couple of bucket sets – one in use, and one waiting to be used once the contents have finished the process and been buried in your garden (or given away). Because your food scraps are pickling rather than composting using this process, they will probably still look recognisable – they will break down rapidly releasing lots of goodness when they are buried.

Check both Councils' websites for information on a subsidy to buy bokashi buckets and where you can buy them (*search word: compost*).

Nā tō rourou, nā tōku rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.

With your food basket, and my food basket, the people will thrive.



**RETHINK
WASTE**


Nelson City Council
Te Kaunihera o Whakatū


tasman
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Te Kaunihera o
te tai o Aorere





TOP TIPS



For Bokashi:

Top tip 1

Only fill your bucket every one to three days. Add a sprinkle of EM, including in the bottom of the bucket when you start, as this is an anaerobic system which should be exposed to as little air as possible. Keep your bucket out of direct sunlight.

Top tip 2

As the bin fills use a potato masher or similar to compact the food and squeeze out air pockets. Cut your scraps into smaller sizes to help the process.

Top tip 3

Bokashi doesn't work for paper (although a little bit is fine), garden waste, liquids, oils, bones and shells.

Top tip 4

When your bucket is full, add a double pinch of EM and put the sealed bucket in a warm place like a hot water cupboard for about 14 days.

Top tip 5

Once your bucket has rested, it's time to bury the contents. Ideal places are your veggie garden or anywhere you want to grow something – just add some carbon rich materials like straw or shredded cardboard to mix it up a bit. Cover the buried materials with about 30cm of soil. You can also dig it into your compost heap for great results.

Top tip 6

Bokashi juice has lots of uses. You can dilute 200:1 to feed your plants and trees. Dilute 100:1 to feed your compost heap. A mix of 500:1 is good for foliar sprays, for example for tomato plants. Finally pour it neat down your household drains, sinks or toilets – it will help eat some of the grime in your pipes.

Top tip 7

If your bokashi bucket develops an unpleasant smell, make sure the lid is very well sealed and take off the liquid (the liquid is the likely cause of a smelly failure). Don't add rotten or mouldy food.

Top tip 8

White mould is fine but black, blue or green mould is a sign that all is not well – bury the contents with some extra EM sawdust in a spot you won't disturb for a while.

