



## How does the Bokashi work?

The key to the success of this system is the specifically designed Bokashi Bucket, and the use of EM Bokashi.

Bokashi is a Japanese term that means "fermented organic matter. EM Bokashi is a pleasant smelling product made using a combination of sawdust and bran that has been infused with Effective Micro-organisms (EM). EM Bokashi has traditionally been used to increase the microbial diversity and activity in soils and to supply nutrients to plants.

- Place your kitchen waste into the bucket, then sprinkle a hand full of EM Bokashi over the waste.
- Repeat this layering process until the Bokashi Bucket is full.
- Drain off liquid (Bokashi juice) as necessary.

Once the bucket is full to capacity, the waste can be buried. If you have two Bokashi Buckets, begin the process again in your second bucket. Let the waste from the first Bokashi Bucket continue to ferment for 10-14 days or for any additional length of time. Then, bury the waste and wash out Bokashi Bucket ready to use when your second Bokashi Bucket is full. If you have only one Bokashi Bucket the waste can be buried as soon as it is full, obviously the waste on the top has not had much or any chance to ferment, even so, the waste will still break down quickly because of the micro-organisms mixed in.

With two Bokashi Buckets the waste gets extra time to ferment, you will get more of the valuable Bokashi Juice and it is more convenient, however, this wonderful composting system will still work with just one Bokashi Bucket.

Bokashi Compost will look different to other compost that has decayed. As the food waste does not breakdown or decompose while it is in the bucket, much of its original physical property will remain and it will have a pickled appearance. Breakdown of waste will occur after it has been transferred to the soil.

## Burying Bokashi Compost

Burying Bokashi Compost in the garden will supply the plants with a nourishing food source and condition your soil with enriching microbes.

- Dig a hole, add your fermented Bokashi Compost, mix with some soil and cover.
- If you are low on garden space you can create a Bokashi Compost Heap, by burying a large bottomless bucket with lid.
- You can use your Bokashi Compost in planter boxes, tubs or pots by placing it directly into the container for further fermentation.

## Bokashi Juice

As the kitchen waste starts to ferment, Bokashi Juice will form in the bottom of the bucket. This should be drained off as it builds up.

- Bokashi Juice can be diluted with water and makes a terrific fertiliser for garden or pot plants.
- It can be poured down drains and it is safe to use in septic tanks.

When used in drains it will help to clean up our water ways by competing with harmful bacteria.

Please! Please! Make sure you don't unscrew the tap more than 3/4 of a turn. More than this will loosen central mechanism of the tap itself and cause issues.

## USING THE BOKASHI BUCKET.

The Bokashi Bucket is a practical and convenient alternative for transforming kitchen waste into a nutrient rich soil conditioner. This unique composting system uses the revolutionary EM (Effective Micro-Organism) Bokashi to create the ideal conditions for airtight (anaerobic) composting, eliminating the odours and unpleasantness associated with putrefaction and decay.



## WHAT YOU CAN COMPOST

You can compost almost every kitchen food waste including fresh fruit and vegetables, prepared foods, cooked and uncooked meats and fish, cheese, eggs, bread, coffee grinds, tea bags, wilted flowers and tissues.

Do not include liquids such as milk and fruit juice, paper and plastic wrap or meat bones.



## STEP BY STEP

1. Place a 3-4 cm layer of organic waste on top of the grate before coating evenly with a layer of EM Bokashi. Use approximately one handful of EM Bokashi to every layer of waste. Use more EM Bokashi when adding high protein foods such as meat, fish, cheese and eggs.
2. Press down to remove air after every application. A plastic bag can be used for this.
3. In order to reduce the oxygen and create the conditions for the anaerobic fermentation process to take place, ensure that the lid is closed tightly after each application.

4. Repeat this layering process until the bucket is full, and top-up with a generous layer of EM Bokashi.
5. Frequently drain the Bokashi Juice that has accumulated in the bottom of the bucket. You can dilute this Bokashi Juice (see instructions below) to make your own organic soil conditioner or tip it down the sink to help clean-up our waterways!
6. Once the bucket is full to capacity, let the contents ferment for a period of 10-14 days at room temperature, continuing to drain off the Bokashi Juice regularly. While this full bucket of waste is fermenting, begin the process again in your second bucket. Wash the Bokashi Bucket after each use.
7. Once the fermentation period is over, you will see that the food has been preserved and now has an appearance similar to pickles. The following indicates The Bokashi Bucket composting process has been a success:
  8. Smell: Well fermented Bokashi Compost should have a smell similar to that of pickles or cider vinegar.
  9. Visual: Occasionally, particularly for longer fermentation periods a white cotton-like fungi growth may appear on the surface. This shows that a good fermentation process has occurred.



**INDICATIONS THAT THE FERMENTATION PROCESS HAS NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL ARE:**

- Smell: A strong rancid or rotten smell
- Visual: The presence of black or blue green fungi indicates that contamination has occurred and the process has putrefied.

**IF YOU HAVE NOTICED ANY OF THESE SIGNS IT IS PROBABLY THE RESULT OF:**

- Not adding enough EM Bokashi
- Not replacing The Bokashi Bucket lid tightly after every use
- Not draining the Bokashi Juice frequently from the bucket
- Prolonged and direct exposure to sunlight or extreme temperatures

If your fermentation process has struck problems, find a spot in the garden, away from plants and dig a 30-35 cm hole. Place 3 handfuls of Bokashi into the bottom of the hole tip the poor batch of



compost into the hole and mix with some soil. Sprinkle another 3 handfuls of Bokashi onto the poor compost and fill the hole in with soil.

## USING YOUR BOKASHI COMPOST

After the fermentation period is complete, the compost is ready to be planted. Bokashi Compost will look different to other compost that has decayed. As the food waste does not breakdown or decompose while it is in the bucket, much of its original physical property will remain and it will have a pickled appearance. Complete breakdown of waste will occur a few weeks after it has been transferred to the soil.



## Suggestions for the garden:

Burying Bokashi Compost in the garden will supply the plants with a nourishing food source and condition your soil with enriching microbes. The Bokashi Bucket composting system significantly accelerates the composting process of organic waste. Bokashi Compost is acidic when first dug in, but neutralizes after 7-10 days. Be sure plant roots do not come directly into contact with the compost as it may burn the roots, particularly if the plants are very young. Fresh compost can be stressful to new plants so it is best to wait two weeks before planting your favourite veggies, flowers etc.



To prepare your soil before planting, dig a hole or trench approximately 20-25 cm deep. Add your fermented Bokashi Compost and mix in some soil. Cover with remaining soil. For established gardens, dig the holes around shrubs or between rows of trees.

If you don't have space to dig a new hole every time you empty your bucket, you can create a "Bokashi compost heap" by burying a large bottomless plastic bucket with a good lid (30 litres and above is ideal) up to its neck. Mix a little soil to each batch of Bokashi Compost that you place into the bucket, and replace the lid.

You can use your Bokashi Compost in planter boxes, tubs or pots by placing it directly into the container for further fermentation. Fill 1/3 of the container with potting mix (new or used) then add the Bokashi Compost and mix with soil. Fill the remaining 1/3 of the container with potting mix and cover with a plastic bag to maintain anaerobic

conditions. Wait two weeks before planting your favourite veggies or flowers, or transfer potting mix into smaller pots for planting.

## HOW TO USE BOKASHI JUICE

The amount and colour of the Bokashi Juice produced will depend on the type of foods you have put into The Bokashi Bucket. Fruit and vegetables tend to release more liquid than other foods. Do not be concerned if little or no Bokashi Juice is produced.

### **Bokashi Juice can be used for:**

**The Garden** – Bokashi Juice contains nutrients from the food waste and is alive with Effective Micro-organisms (EM) and makes a terrific fertiliser. To fertilise an existing garden or pot plants use 1 teaspoon to 2-3 litres of water and apply directly to the soil. For trees and shrubs use 2 teaspoons to 2-3 litres of water. Do not apply directly to foliage.

**Around the House** – Pour the concentrated Bokashi Juice directly into your kitchen and bathroom drains, toilets or septic systems. The Effective Micro-organisms (EM) will help to prevent algae build-up and control odour. It will also help to clean up our waterways by competing with harmful bacteria.

Bokashi Juice cannot be stored and must be used within 24 hours after draining from the bucket

## HELPFUL TIPS

You can never add too much EM Bokashi; better too much than too little to ensure complete fermentation and good smelling compost.

Only add fresh food waste to The Bokashi Bucket, never rotten or mouldy wastes.

- Break or chop large waste into smaller pieces.
- Remember - the less air that comes in contact with the compost the better so compact the waste by pressing it down to remove air. A plastic bag can be used for this.
- Always close the lid tightly and drain the Bokashi Juice that accumulates at the bottom frequently.



- Do not add water, excessive amounts of fluids or place the bucket in the sun.
- Wash the bucket after each use.
- The Bokashi Bucket has been designed to be used with EM Bokashi. Used with other products may result in putrefaction rather than fermentation of food wastes.
- This is a new approach to composting. Don't be afraid to experiment with it until you get a feel for how this process can work for you.
- Look into community composting & gardening projects in your area.