Best Practices for Composting

Location
- Locate compost pile at least 1 meter away from all structures to prevent damage in case of a fire in the compost
- Locate compost pile away from potential sources of contamination (i.e., garbage, water runoff, etc.)
- Animal or pest access will be restricted as much as possible (i.e., by use of a fence or other enclosure)

Material and Treatment
- Only use plant-derived materials for the compost, or if using manure, use only chicken and herbivore manure
- Maintain the internal temperature of compost above 131°F for at least 3 consecutive days, verified through the use of a temperature measuring device designed for the task
- Turn the compost at least once per week
- Cure the compost for a minimum of 2 months
- Implement controls to prevent cross-contamination of mature or completed compost with fresh, non-composted plant material

Hygienic Considerations
- Clean hands thoroughly with soap and potable water in a designated location after handling compost or compostable material
- Protect individuals with asthma or other respiratory illness by excluding them from compost-turning duties

Equipment
- Clean and sanitize composting equipment/tools before being used for harvesting activities in the garden, if equipment is shared for the two duties

Quality Control
- Document the method to calibrate the temperature measuring device - check manufacturer specifications
- Use a log to record and track compost temperatures