

Annual Carbon Club

Drawdown Instructions

“The Great Suburban Carbon Drawdown Challenge”

The goal is to increase not just any growth, but healthy growth of your trees and lawn. Healthy plant growth increases photosynthetic capabilities, which means your plant/tree produces more sugars that it can send down to exude out the roots. This is how compost literally Feeds your soil. Your soil is the microbiome of fungi, prokaryotes, protoctists and animals living in conjunction with your trees roots. Their lifelong activities cause carbon to be stored in the soil. This is how we draw down carbon.

“Applying compost to your trees and yard should be considered annual standard maintenance for your property.” - Andrew Brousseau

Phase 1 - Apply Compost to Trees

The maximum benefit of the compost is received if every Sept/Oct you use compost and twigs to prepare the area around your trees. This area from approximately 4ft from the trunk of a tree out to about 15ft or to the edge of the canopy is called ‘the drip line’. This is where the Tree’s Feeder Roots are.

Step 1 - Apply the compost here first BEFORE the Fall leaves come down.

Step 2 - Break up sticks from your yard and scatter them through the drip line.

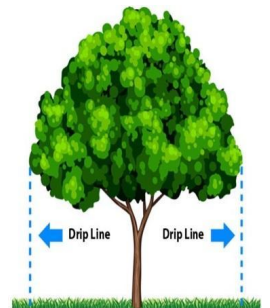
-----Now you are ready for the leaves to come down-----

When the leaves land, they will be everywhere. Leave the leaves in your newly formed drip line feeding zone. This is now the soil situation that your tree has always been expecting. It can now proceed with Healthy Growth.

Note: Do not add excess leaves to this area as that can suffocate the very roots you are trying to feed.

Note 2: Children love to break up sticks and throw them in an area.

Note 3: Where is the drip line? The feeder roots generally start roughly 4 ft from the trunk of a 2 ft diameter tree. They go out to roughly where the canopy ends. If you lawn comes in close around the tree, just setup the feeding zone in whatever feeder root areas you can give to the tree.



Phase 2 - Apply left over Compost to Lawn (seed now if desired)

This compost is screened to a ½ inch so it fits between the blades of grass. You can use this compost to seed or to improve general lawn health. Seeding has instant results, general lawn health takes a few years of continued application. Pick an area of your lawn that you want to see improve and give compost a try.

Seeding

Step 1 - Spread seed in an area (and a little beyond) that you want to fill in with grass.

Step 2 - Use shovel to heavy sprinkle compost over the seeded areas.

Step 3 - Use a ‘spring leaf rake’ to distribute compost evenly and between existing grass blades. Goal is to not use so much force on the rake that you are kicking up the seed you laid.

General Lawn Health

- Step 1 - Pick an area of your lawn that has never really done well.
- Step 2 - Determine if the reasons for the malfunctions of this area are an issue that compost *can not* fix; for example... constant foot traffic, very compact soil. Compost *may be able* to fix problems such as root feeding insects, poor soil nutrients, poor water holding capacity.
- Step 3 - Sprinkle throw compost about ¼ inch thick in this area with a shovel. OR dump small wheel barrow loads into piles across the yard area.
- Step 4 - Use 'spring leaf rake' to distribute compost in between grass and even out clumps.
- Step 5 - Repeat for the next 2 years.
- Step 6 - Determine if compost improved this area of lawn for you.

Phase 3 - More ways to reduce your Carbon Footprint.

Cut Grass Taller. Raising your blade by ½ inch can give you another 5-10 days between mows. Some landscapers may not want to do this because it messes up their schedule. However fewer mows means less gas burned and more resilient grass. Short grass is very susceptible to drying out. [Result - Less fuel used on your lawn.](#)

Dedicate small plot of land to pollinators. Dig up 4ft x 4ft area of lawn. Shake out dirt (Compost the grass). Add compost. Spread pollinator seed packet (ideally one that is hardy for fall planting). [Result - Promotes pollinators.](#) [Discover the myriad of pollinators that now come here.](#)



Grow Greens. Greens need to be fresh at the grocery store, which means lots of refrigeration, transportation and ultimately waste when they go bad. Grow greens at home to tap into Black Earth's mineral content. Look up Cut-and-Come-Again greens on the Internet. [Result - Fresh greens every night through fall.](#)

Other ideas. Eat less meat. Drive less. Buy less. Use less. Key is to reduce consumption! If investing your money, choose stocks, banks and indices that do not invest in fossil fuel projects.

Hire organic lawn care company. Visit your Black Earth account page and click Sustainable Partners. Get a quote for organic lawn care. [Result - Reduces inputs on your lawn and have a professional take care of it.](#)

Share your tools - Just because mowers, hedge trimmers, leaf blowers, weed wackers etc. are becoming electric, does not mean there is zero impact. These tools only get used by each homeowner a few times each year. That is a lot of idle copper/lithium and other mined minerals sitting in sheds! Consider sharing your yard equipment with your neighbour to reduce the total amount of materials society needs. If each house shared with 1 other house, we could halve the amount of power tools needed. That is the power of going from 1 to 2!

Regenerative Farming. Read up on Regenerative Farming techniques that can be applied to the home garden. These practices focus on nutrient dense soils and low disturbance in order to improve soil health.