Compost from rice straw

Making compost out of rice straw is a good way to earn some extra money and to keep the soil healthy. Therefore you can follow some guidelines.

Rice straw can be used in various forms. But often farmers see it as waste because it doesn‘t compost well, is cheap to sell and there is too many of it. Therefore, the farmers burn the rice straw to make space for the next season. This is bad for the air and kills life in the soil.

Microorganism

To make compost out of straw you need microorganisms which must have a optimal balance out of manure, rice straw, moisture and ventilation.

Bunches that are under 1 metre high doesn‘t heat enough but at the same time a bunch that is too high is to heavy. Without ventilation the process of decomposing slows down. A temperature between 55 and 65 degrees celsius kills most weed seeds and diseases that are in the manure. If the bunch gets over 71 degree celsius it is too hot and all the beneficial microorganism that are used to decompose die.

Making rice straw compost

Add rice straw to fresh manure with a 2 to 1 ratio. Build up the bunch with alternating one layer of straw and one of manure. Furthermore you should add water to each layer. The bunch should be moist but not sinking in. The bunch should be as high as an adult.

In the first six days the compost is too hot to touch it. When it is over 71 degree celsius, it should be turned, so that it cools down. After one week the temperature cools down to 20 degrees celsius. Then it feels warm when you touch it.

You should turn the bunch every 3 to 4 weeks and use this possibility to add water evenly. To make the process faster you can buy effective micro-organisms or EM.

The compost should be ready after 4 month. You will recognize that the straw doesn‘t look like straw anymore, but feels, looks and smells like fresh soil.

Sift the fresh compost before selling, to increase its value.