

# COMMUNITY COMPOSTING COLLECTION PILOT



Going  
Green

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# FROM YOUR KITCHEN TO COMPOST

The materials collected in your kitchen do not go to a landfill! They are transformed into a natural resource!



Your composting service provider collects the material from your community and transports it to a local commercial composting facility.



The material is placed in a large pile, where microorganisms begin to break it down and heat up the pile to very high temperatures.



After about 12 months, the material breaks down and is transformed into an earthy, soil-like material called compost.



Compost is used to fertilize plants, gardens and other outdoor areas.

## AVOID THE "ICK" IN YOUR KITCHEN COLLECTOR

These tips may help reduce odors:

- Line your kitchen collector with a BPI-certified compostable bag, paper bag or newspaper to absorb moisture.\*
- Collect food scraps in a cereal box or tissue box. Remove plastic lining.
- Sprinkle baking soda inside of the kitchen collector.



# COLLECTING YOUR FOOD SCRAPS

Collect food scraps in a kitchen collector. Coffee cans or food storage containers can also be used as compost collectors.



### STEP 1

Keep your kitchen collector in a convenient location in your kitchen, such as on the countertop, under the sink or in the freezer.



### STEP 2

While cooking or cleaning up, place leftover food scraps and food-soiled paper into your kitchen collector.



### STEP 3

Empty the contents of your kitchen collector into the community composting container.

## BPI-CERTIFIED COMPOSTABLE BAGS

BPI-Certified compostable bags have been tested and approved by Biodegradable Products Institute scientists to ensure they will break down completely, quickly and safely during the composting process. Look for the BPI logo on the box when purchasing compostable bags.



- Wash your kitchen collector in the dishwasher or by hand after emptying it.
- Freeze food scraps like meat, poultry and fish in your kitchen collector until it's time to place them in the community composting container.

*\*Properties with valet waste services must place compostable items in a sealed, BPI-certified bag.*



# WHAT GOES IN THE COMPOSTING CONTAINER?

If it grows, it goes!



## FOOD SCRAPS

Cooked or raw meat, poultry and seafood (including bones), cheese, dairy products, fruits, vegetables, grains, pasta, eggshells, bread, coffee grounds, tea bags, tea leaves, baked goods, nuts, jelly, candy, snack foods, leftovers, spoiled food.

### What to Avoid

Do not include liquids, fats, oils, grease, plastic.

## NATURAL FIBERS

Popsicle sticks, shredded paper, toothpicks, wooden chopsticks.

### What to Avoid

No cotton balls or cotton swabs.



## FOOD-SOILED PAPER

Paper bags, paper napkins, paper towels, paper plates, paper cups, paper take-out containers and take-out boxes (with no plastic or wax coating, and with metal removed), pizza boxes, coffee filters, newspaper, tissues.

### What to Avoid

Do not include glossy paper or window envelopes; recycle these items instead.



## HOUSE PLANTS

Plants, flowers, leaves, stems, straw.

### What to Avoid

No rocks, soil, or tree stumps.

For a complete, up-to-date list of accepted materials, please contact your property manager.

## KEEP THESE ITEMS OUT OF THE COMMUNITY COMPOSTING CONTAINER

Prohibited items cannot break down into nutrient-rich compost and can cause a safety hazard for collection crews. Check the list below to find out what to keep out of the community composting container:

- |                    |                           |                      |                     |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| • Aluminum         | • Cigarette butts & ashes | • Fats, oils, grease | • Kitty litter      |
| • Animal carcasses | • Clothing                | • Glass              | • Landscape timbers |
| • Ceramics         | • Diapers                 | • Glossy paper       | • Liquids           |
|                    |                           | • Hazardous waste    | • Medical waste     |

- |                      |                           |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| • Metal              | • Rocks                   |
| • Pet waste          | • Styrofoam               |
| • Plastic bags       | • Trash                   |
| • Plastic containers | • Tree stumps             |
| • Plastic Straws     | • Treated or painted wood |

- |                      |
|----------------------|
| • Wine corks         |
| • Cotton balls/swabs |





# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Why should I try composting?

Austin's 2015 Community Diversion Study found that 37% of material sent to the landfill could have been composted. Compostable material cannot break down in a landfill, as it would in nature or in a compost pile. Instead, it decomposes without oxygen, releasing harmful methane into the atmosphere. Compostable material placed in containers is transported to a local facility, where it breaks down into compost, can be used to help soil retain water and fertilize lawns and gardens without chemicals.

## What do I do with large compostable items that don't fit in my kitchen collector, such as pizza boxes?

Place large compostable items such as pizza boxes directly in your community composting container.

## I have leftover cooking grease and oil. Can I put them in the compost?

No. Fats, oils and greases will not break down in the composting process. However, greasy foods and food-soiled papers can be placed in your community composting container. You can recycle cooking fats, oil and greases at the Recycle and Reuse Drop-Off Center.

## Why can't I put pet waste in the compost?

Pet waste contains bacteria and could contain parasites and viruses that are unable to break down during the composting process and can cause illness in humans. Pet waste, litter, and bedding should be bagged and placed in a garbage bin.

## Since plastic is NOT accepted in the compost container, what do I use to line my kitchen collector?

Only BPI-certified compostable bags are accepted. Look for the BPI logo on the box when purchasing compostable bags.



## Why is it important to keep unaccepted items out of the compost container?

Unaccepted items, like plastic bags, bottles and glass, do not break down naturally and cause significant problems for the composting process. Some items also cause a safety hazard for collection crews. It is important to keep out unaccepted items so they do not contaminate the compost or cause injury.

## LEARN MORE!

For more information about the community composting collection pilot, visit [austintexas.gov/organics](http://austintexas.gov/organics)