



What is the food scrap recycling program?

The food scrap recycling program collects food scraps and food-soiled paper to be “recycled” into compost instead of going into the garbage. Residents collect the food scraps and paper items in kitchen pails provided by the cities, and transfer them to their yard waste cart for weekly collection.

Why recycle food scraps?

Food scraps and food-soiled paper are the largest unrecycled portion of the residential waste stream, making up over 35 percent of what residents throw away. By turning food scraps into compost, residents are able to help save landfill space and create compost.

What items can be recycled?

All food products, including fruit, vegetables, breads, cereal, dairy, meat (including bones); coffee grounds, filters and tea bags; and food-soiled paper, including paper towels, plates, napkins, pizza boxes and lunch sacks. Items that are not accepted include plastic (including bags and Styrofoam), glass, metal, liquids and pet waste.

How is this different from back yard composting?

Materials such as meat and bones, which should not be composted in back yard systems, can be collected and processed. The food scrap recycling program is a convenient alternative for people who don't have time or space to compost and allows them to recycle almost everything.

What is compost?

Compost is a valuable product used by farmers and landscapers. Compost enriches the soil, conserves water, provide erosion control and grow healthier plants and crops.

Which cities are participating?

Thirteen cities in Alameda County have begun food scrap recycling programs: Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Castro Valley, Dublin, Emeryville, Fremont, Livermore, Newark, Oakland, Pleasanton, San Leandro and Union City. Two Cities will be starting food scrap recycling programs within the next year: Piedmont in summer 2008 and Hayward in 2009.

Food Scrap Recycling Reduces Green House Gases

There are essentially two ways that food scrap recycling reduces Green House Gases (GHGs): 1) by removing organics from the landfill we reduce methane production; and 2) through the use of compost made from food scraps. Food scraps emit more methane than any other material in the landfill. Keeping food scraps out of the landfill reduces the amount of methane produced. Methane is 23 times more potent a GHG than Carbon Dioxide (CO₂). The use of compost improves soil quality

and increases crop yield and reduces the need for fertilizers and pesticides, which are extremely energy intensive to make and transport. Transporting water for agriculture is energy intensive; compost use helps soil retain water and reduces water consumption.

Where can people get more information?

For more information, go to www.StopWaste.Org/foodscraps.

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