

LET'S SCRAP FOOD WASTE

This document is meant to be a starting point for a business looking to incorporate food waste collection into their daily work flow. It is by no means all encompassing but will give a manager/owner a good idea of where to start with preparations. Below, you will find products, which can be sourced from local stores or online, suitable for food waste collection and you will gain an understanding of compostable certifications for appropriate materials.



This packet for businesses was created with help from WSWMD's USDA grant helping rural communities in Windham County divert food scraps from the landfill.

Windham Solid Waste Management District
is an Equal Opportunities Provider



Disclaimer

A few things to consider when buying compostable products: 1) Thickness will determine the use for your compostable product. When it comes to bags a thicker bag will hold up well when tying the bag off and lifting it to its next destination. Bags thinner than 0.85 mil could rip while handling and may be more suited to a smaller volume of food waste or simply used as a liner. 2) If it's not certified compostable... it might not be able to breakdown in ours and our neighbor's compost operations. Of course, paper items (with no added plastic) will all be fine and do not require certification, but if it is a plastic-like material do look for the appropriate certifications shown below:



If a product has any of the following certifications, your item IS compostable! If it does not hold any certifications, then how can you be sure?

- ASTM D6400
- BPI
- EN 13432
- TÜV
- Compost Manufacturing Alliance (CMA)

If you see the following labels, look for actual certifications or else you may be bamboozled:

- Compostable
- Biodegradable
- Green
- Eco Friendly
- Sustainable

Bags

Not everyone finds that compostable plastic bags, similar to traditional trash bags, are completely necessary in their practices but some utterly depend on it. Compostable bucket/bin liners make emptying your receptacles much easier and reduce the amount of clean up necessary when collecting food scraps, which can be juicy at times in warmer months and frozen in the colder season. The collection bags below are all certified compostable and vary in thickness. Depending on whether you're using the bag as a liner or if you plan to lift the bag out by hand, different methods will make this process easier. It should be noted that if you are using bags that are not certified compostable, they need to be disposed of separately. Only bags that come in a box labeled with the appropriate certifications AND are individually marked with the compostable certification are considered acceptable to compost manufacturers. Make sure you are not getting something that has been "greenwashed". Many compostable bag options can be found at Brown and Roberts, Achille Agway, Hannaford's, Fireside True Value, the Brattleboro Food Co-op, and One Stop Country Pet Store.



EcoSafe is an excellent brand for larger compostable bags. Rated for ASTM D6400 this bag has been proven to breakdown in a natural composting process. The bags are **0.85 mil thick** so they can withstand food waste of all sorts. This is a great choice as a liner for your larger totes that you may already have in use for other waste materials. EcoSafe has bags sized for 2.5 gallons all the way up to 90 gallon capacity. Withstands exposure to liquids and holds up well when stored outside in the winter within the designated tote. Buy on greenpaperproducts.com or www.zoro.com





These USA made bags are, you guessed it, compostable. This product meets ASTM D6400 standards for breakdown in industrial compost systems. At **0.85 mil thick**, these will protect your bins from spillage and therefore can stand up to freezing temps without sticking to your collection bins. Translucency assists with identifying contamination. Bags range in size from 12-16 gallons to 55-60 gallons. Purchase from plasticplace.com or other online vendors.



Biobag offers collection 3 gallon (**0.64 mil**) and 13 gallon (**0.68 mil**) food scrap collection bags. Biobag is the leading brand for compostable plastic-like products. Some find the material to be a bit soft/delicate, compared to Forid's stiff and sturdy bags, mil unknown. However, this is a great option if compostable alternatives are not available at any given time. Smaller compostable bags, due to their volume capacity, rarely have breakage issues. For larger bags we recommend something a little hardier. Check out the biobagusa.com site for purchasing options.



Still didn't find what you need? Check out BPI's website which lists countless certified compostable bag vendors. Check out more products at <http://products.bpiworld.org/> Remember, if it's BPI certified it is guaranteed to break down and be free of PFAS and other chemicals.



Bins & Buckets

Bins, whether for trash, recycling, or food scraps, are basically all the same. Considerations for bins used for food scrap collection in Bear country are a bit more involved than your regular trash barrel but the idea is the same - contain the waste until it moves onto the next stop without creating a mess or giving off odors. When it comes to indoor food scrap collection, many alternative containers exist. Shop/thrift around for one, or get creative with a DIY project in order to suit your company's aesthetics.



This 2.4 gallon capacity compost collector is perfect for low volume food scrap collection. With its replaceable air filter, this container will keep odors from escaping. Find at Home Depot or their website.



The Sure Close kitchen compost caddy holds 1.9 gallon of compostables and is available at WSWMD for \$10! This model has a lockable and breathable lid which aids in moisture retention and the prevention of unwanted odors. Check out WSWMD's website or give them a call for more information.



How about a classy ceramic crock for your food scraps? This example from Gardens Alive, available at Home Depot or on their website, offers a clean look, a carbon filter for odor control, and a handle for easy handling.



If your food scrap waste is more substantial, say in a commercial kitchen, a larger volume container might be needed for daily use. This 8 gallon Garland food scrap container comes with odor filters and compost caddy liners. This package deal is available from Home Depot.



Have a tight space to work with and don't have much room for extra bins? Slim Jim offers an answer for compost collection. These narrow, 23 gallon capacity bins, are perfect for the food prep station. Of course, you can use existing Slim Jims for whatever you'd like to put in them, but this offers a very clear message to the staff about expectations for the use of this bin. This one was found on websturant.com.



Already using a circular bin for food scraps? Swap it out with something a littler greener. This 32 gallon Brute container is designed with venting channels to allow easy liner removal. Green and labeled, this bin clearly demonstrates its purpose and will signal to staff a sustainable switch. Found on websturant.com. Throw it on a dolly and wheel it out to your outdoor collection bin.



Ideal for businesses with a small volume of organic waste per week. This \$20, 13 gallon, curbside cart is easy to use by haulers and individuals hauling on their own. Purchase your cart at the Municipal Center in Brattleboro at 230 Main St in the Finance Dept (2nd floor, Suite 208).



Sometimes a 5 gallon bucket is your best bet for in-house food scrap collection. Being able to seal the bucket is especially important for the warmer months. A tight fitting lid will deter insects and other pests from proliferating. A screw top lid is especially helpful to keep liquids in and are easier to remove than pop-top lids.



Take Out/Front of House

Some businesses create a lot of waste when it comes to the tools of takeout (utensils, clam shells, etc), but there are alternatives that put the business and the customer's environmental conscience at ease. The items below are all rated for breaking down completely in a commercial compost setting, which is exactly the setting that Windham County has in place for diverting food scraps and other organic waste. Of course many vendors exist for this new wave of compostable products, but the popularly used site, Webstaurant, offers a plethora of options. From disposable wooden spoons to compostable plastic straws you can find a compostable alternative for each and every disposable, front of house accoutrement imaginable. Some alternatives are even near in price to their plastic twins. Although compostable plastics are theorized to breakdown in an industrial compost system, wooden alternatives typically outperform plastics in the field and are often just as sturdy as their plant-based plastic alternatives. The same cannot be said for paper straws... they just don't hold up for very long.



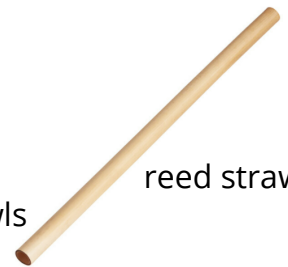
wooden utensils



appetizer bowls



palm leaf plates and bowls



reed straws



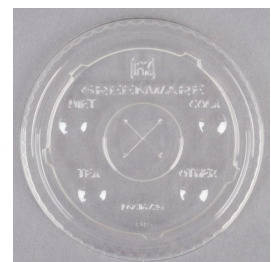
portion cups



cold drink cups



hot drink covers



cool drink covers



portion cups & lids



food/drink picks



take out containers



Extra

The items below will help you revolutionize your workspace. From compostable gloves to tools for maintaining your new, regenerative systems.



Gloves! If you can handle a loose fitting glove for sanitation needs, then this compostable version could be an upgrade for your staff. Found on greenpaperproducts.com

Resealable Food Storage Products



Resealable food storage bags. If you find you're using a lot of ziplocks and want a disposable alternative that doesn't create waste in the landfill, then these are here for you. Biobagusa.com will help you locate an online vendor to purchase these from.



If you are using a small food scrap collection container that has a space for a carbon filter, don't leave it in forever! Make sure to change out your carbon filters every 6 months or so to ensure odor and insect control. You can find these at Agway or Home Depot.





Keep your bin liners in place with large rubber bands. These bands (not compostable) are reusable and outlast the winter blues even when stored on the bin outside. When liners shift and food/liquids seep into your toter, there is risk of your food waste freezing to the inside walls - it is also not a fun thing to clean, so keep those bags in place with a sturdy rubber band! You can find these at your local hardware store.



Protect your hands while handling food waste! Waterproof gloves are preferable over cotton or leather work gloves. These are handy for taking out the tra- I mean compost and for handling food waste collection bins. Find a pair at your local hardware store.



Not using a liner? This is just what you need! Covering your compost collection with a 2" layer of sawdust and/or wood shavings will greatly decrease the chance of a bear visit and it will deter flies from spreading in and around you food collection area. Having this cheap and easy to use amendment on hand at all times (and near your food scrap bin) makes all the difference when it comes to pests and odor.