



Larchmont-Mamaroneck Joint Garbage Disposal Commission

FAQS ON FOOD WASTE RECYCLING

Why Recycle Food Waste?

Food waste is one of the largest components of trash sent to landfills and incinerators. However, food waste is not trash; it is a resource that can be turned into useful compost.

Recycling food waste into compost captures its nutrients and energy and returns them to the environment. When food waste is sent to a landfill or incinerator this resource is lost. In a landfill, food waste creates methane, which is a potent greenhouse gas that traps CO₂ and contributes to global warming. When sent to an incinerator, food waste reduces the efficiency of the incinerator because food waste contains water and therefore doesn't burn well.

Composting food waste turns that story around! Instead of wasting energy trying to burn food, or creating methane from landfilling it, composting food waste produces a useful and valuable product that gives back to our nutrient life cycle resulting in cleaner soil, water and air.

What Is Compost?

Compost is a soil amendment which enriches our soil. When purchasing a bag of potting soil or observing your landscaper putting down "dirt," you are using compost.

Compost benefits our landscape by maximizing plant growth, preventing soil erosion and mitigating the frequency of water, fertilizer and pesticide use.

By recycling your food waste you are reducing waste and creating compost - a double win!

How can I participate in the Larchmont-Mamaroneck Joint Garbage Disposal Commission's Food Waste Recycling Program?

You can participate in this program as long as you are a resident of the unincorporated Town of Mamaroneck or Village of Larchmont. This is a drop-off and voluntary program. You are NOT required to have a food waste "starter kit" to participate as you can bring your food waste in

another receptacle to Maxwell Avenue Recycling Center. As of September 18, 2017 food waste is being accepted at the Recycling Center during regular operating hours. The drop-off site is located up the hill close to the office – look for the large signage saying “Food Waste Drop-off Site.” If you would like to purchase a starter kit to make recycling your food waste mess-free and easier, kits are available at Maxwell Avenue Sanitation Center, Larchmont Village Hall and Mamaroneck Town Center.

Press: <http://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/westchester/2017/08/29/composting-programs-spreading-through-sound-shore/576709001/>

<http://westchester.news12.com/story/36386420/mamaroneck-larchmont-launch-new-composting-program>

What do I do once I have a starter kit?

Most residents will fill the countertop pail with food waste 3-4 times per week. Therefore it is suggested that residents also have a larger bin to TRANSFER food waste into for weekly storage. This larger six-gallon bin can also be used for transportation of food waste to the Recycling Center. It is recommended that this food storage bin be kept indoors – either in the house or in the garage.

You will then bring your transportation bin to the food waste drop-off area at Maxwell Avenue’s Recycling Center to dispose of your food waste as often as needed.

What goes into the food waste bins?

- ALL FOOD, including:
 - Fruits and Vegetables (remove stickers, bands, ties)
 - Meat and Poultry (bones ok)
 - Fish and Shellfish (shells ok)
 - Dairy Products
 - Bread and Pasta
 - Rice and Grains
 - Egg Shells
 - Chips and Snacks
 - Nuts and Seeds
 - Leftover, Spoiled and Expired Food (cooked ok)
 - Coffee Grounds (paper filters ok)
- Tea Bags (no staples)
- Paper Towels and Napkins
- Cut Flowers
- Compostable Bags (no plastic bags)

**Note: This is more than backyard composting allows for!
(See food waste guide insert in the countertop pail)**

What items are not accepted?

- No twist ties or stickers on fruit.
- Plastic bags, plastic packaging and wrappers are never allowed in the bins. Plastic does not biodegrade and therefore will contaminate the compost. Use only compostable bags, paper bags, or no bags.
- Baby/Hand wipes are never allowed in the bins. They are synthetic, do not biodegrade and will contaminate the compost.
- No pet waste.

Where will the food waste end up?

All material collected will be brought to a commercial composting facility, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency in Kingston, NY, where it will be turned into compost.

Where does Westchester County's trash go?

In Westchester, 2,250 tons of municipal solid waste are burned at the county's incinerator in Peekskill each day. Discarded food makes up almost 22 percent of waste in landfills and incinerators, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Where else is there a residential, drop-off food waste composting program?

In January 2017, the Village of Scarsdale launched their food scrap recycling program, which our program is modeled after. Over 800 households in Scarsdale (about 15% of households) are now participating in their program, which has far exceeded their expectations.

<http://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/westchester/scarsdale/2017/02/15/scarsdale-food-scrap-recycling/97659302/>

Are there any cities in the U.S. that have food waste composting programs?

Yes. New York City's residential organics collection program is already the largest in the country. More than a million residents in parts of all five boroughs have curbside service. By the end of next year (2018), officials say, all city residents will have a way to recycle their food scraps and other leaf and yard waste. Smaller cities like Portland, Ore.; San Francisco; and Seattle all have mandatory programs.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/02/nyregion/compost-organic-recycling-new-york-city.html?mcubz=1&r=0>