

COLLECT FOOD SCRAPS IN YOUR RESTAURANT

ECOSAFE[®]
ZERO WASTE






RESTAURANT FOOD SCRAPS COLLECTION PROGRAM GUIDE

Welcome to your restaurant's food scraps collection program! Follow these concise steps for easy onboarding, engagement, and great results with minimal contamination.

INTRODUCTION

Implementing a food scraps collection program in your restaurant helps keep organic waste out of landfills, supports sustainability, and can even improve efficiency. This guide will provide you with the necessary tools and tips to start collecting food scraps effectively in both front-of-house and back-of-house areas.



Food service and restaurant businesses can achieve significant financial savings by composting food waste, which reduces the volume and weight of waste sent to landfills and lowers waste disposal costs. The [EPA](#) highlights that composting can reduce solid waste management expenses as food scraps are among the heaviest portions of the waste stream. Studies, such as one by the [World Resources Institute](#), show that for every dollar invested in reducing food waste, businesses save \$14 or more.

Composting also generates economic benefits, including job creation and increased state gross product, as seen in Massachusetts. Similarly, in Canada, composting helps businesses reduce waste disposal fees and aligns with environmental sustainability goals, enhancing their public image and attracting eco-conscious customers. For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), composting can lead to substantial cost savings over 1, 3, and 5 years, with significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and improvements in soil health, demonstrating a meaningful impact on both economic and environmental fronts.



THE IMPORTANCE OF COMPOSTING IN A RESTAURANT SETTING

COMPOSTING IN A RESTAURANT SETTING IS VITAL FOR SEVERAL REASONS.

01

Reduces Overall Disposal Costs:

02

Environmental Impact:

Composting reduces methane emissions from landfills, a potent greenhouse gas contributing to climate change. It transforms food waste into nutrient-rich compost, which enhances soil health and supports local agriculture.

03

Operational Efficiency:

Separating food scraps can streamline waste management processes and reduce overall waste disposal costs. Restaurants save money by separating food waste from trash through reduced waste disposal fees, as food waste is heavy and bulky. This leads to lower frequency and cost of waste collection.

Participating in municipal composting programs can also cut down costs, and some restaurants may generate revenue or tax benefits by selling or donating compost. Additionally, monitoring food waste helps optimize purchasing decisions, reducing over-ordering and spoilage. Lastly, promoting sustainability can attract environmentally conscious customers, potentially boosting sales. It can also lead to a cleaner and more organized kitchen environment, promoting better hygiene and efficiency.



04

Consumer Perception:

Data indicates that consumers are increasingly willing to pay a premium for dining experiences that align with their environmental values. By implementing a robust composting program, restaurants can attract eco-conscious customers and enhance their brand reputation.

Communicating your composting efforts can serve as a powerful marketing tool, demonstrating your commitment to sustainability and responsible practices.

05

Regulatory Compliance:

Many regions are implementing stricter waste management regulations, including mandatory composting for commercial entities. Staying ahead of these regulations can help avoid potential fines and legal issues.



PROGRAM FEATURES

CLEAR SIGNAGE
AND POSTERS

CERTIFIED
COMPOSTABLE BAGS
AND BINS

STAFF ENGAGEMENT
STRATEGIES

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Your food scraps collection program works seamlessly alongside your trash and recycling processes with these three easy steps:

01

GRAB

Line each organic waste bin with a compostable bag.

02

FILL

Collect food scraps from all staff and customers.

03

DROP

Staff responsible for taking out trash can take the food scraps collection and place in the central collection container.



PRE-PROGRAM SETUP

01 CONDUCT A WASTE AUDIT

Audit: Understand the types of waste your restaurant produces. Here's an easy and effective way to conduct your waste audit:

Compare the number of buckets (food waste) to the number of garbage bags (total waste) from the previous day. While not exact, this method offers a rough estimate of the proportion of food waste.

Repeat: Perform this practice for several days to get a more accurate and consistent estimate. This helps in determining the size and number of food waste bins needed for the business.

02 FIND A COMPOST HAULER

Contact your current waste hauler to check if they offer organics collection. If not, find a hauler in your area that does. To help remove the barrier of researching providers and comparing prices, EcoSafe can help find an operator in your area.

03 CHOOSE THE RIGHT TOOLS

Bins: Order enough bins for the estimated food waste.





Bags: Ensure you have the right-sized compostable bags for your bins.

EcoSafe's calculator make's it easy:
<https://ecosafe.green/bag-calculator/>





IMPLEMENTATION STEPS FOR FRONT-OF-HOUSE (FOH)



PLACE FOOD SCRAP BINS STRATEGICALLY:

-  In self serve restaurants, place bins near customer dining areas and any food waste stations for food scraps from plates.
-  In other restaurant settings, have front-of-house staff scrape food into bins at the dishwashing area. Add a collection area behind the bar as this is often an over-looked area that produces an extremely high percentage of food waste from garnishes, juicing fruits, etc.
-  For larger properties like banquet or outdoor events, ensure to purchase bins on wheels to transport food waste back to central collection areas.
-  Ensure all bins are clearly labeled with signage to reduce confusion and contamination.

USE SIGNAGE:

-  Place easy-to-understand signs above each bin explaining what can and cannot be composted.
-  Include images to assist in proper sorting. EcoSafe can help with this step. Request signage here [[link to a website form or URL for print](#)].

STAFF TRAINING:

-  Train staff to monitor bins for contamination.
-  Engage staff in explaining the compost story to customers.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS FOR BACK-OF-HOUSE (BOH)

01 PLACE BINS IN KEY AREAS:

- Near food prep stations, dishwashing areas, and other high waste-generating spots.
- Ensure bins are accessible and properly labeled.



02 USE SIGNAGE:

- Use clear, durable signs to instruct staff on what materials go into each bin.
- Regularly check your city's website for details on what's accepted in your composter's process and update signs if needed.

03 STAFF TRAINING:

- Educate kitchen staff on the importance of separating food waste.
- Provide specific guidelines on what can be composted.



PROGRAMM LAUNCH

01

PREPARATION:

- 🌿 Ensure all bins and bags are in place.
- 🌿 Finalize all agreements with haulers and suppliers.

02

COMMUNICATION:

- 🌿 Notify all staff of the upcoming program launch.
- 🌿 Make announcements and provide detailed instructions.

03

TRAINING:

- 🌿 Hold training sessions for both FOH and BOH staff.
- 🌿 Provide a point of contact for questions and additional supplies.



PROGRAM MAINTENANCE

MONITOR CONTAMINATION:

- Designate a staff member to regularly check bins to ensure no inorganic materials are present. Monitor if food waste percentages change i.e. whether the amount of garbage bags has increased and assess what is needed.
- Address any contamination issues promptly. Taking photos of what's found in the bin and posting it near the bin is helpful to employees to acknowledge what can and can't go in the bin.

ONGOING TRAINING:

- Continually educate new and existing staff. Reinforce proper sorting practices.

ENGAGE STAFF:

- Keep staff motivated and involved through incentives and recognition.

CONTAMINATION REDUCTION STRATEGIES



Reducing contamination in a restaurant's food scrap collection program is crucial for its success. Here are some effective strategies to minimize contamination:

01 CLEAR AND CONSISTENT SIGNAGE

Visual Aids: Use posters with images and examples of what can and cannot be composted. Place these above or on the bins.

Language: Ensure signs are in the primary languages spoken by your staff and customers.

02 STAFF TRAINING AND ENGAGEMENT

Initial Training: Conduct comprehensive training sessions for all staff members, explaining the importance of proper sorting and the negative impacts of contamination.

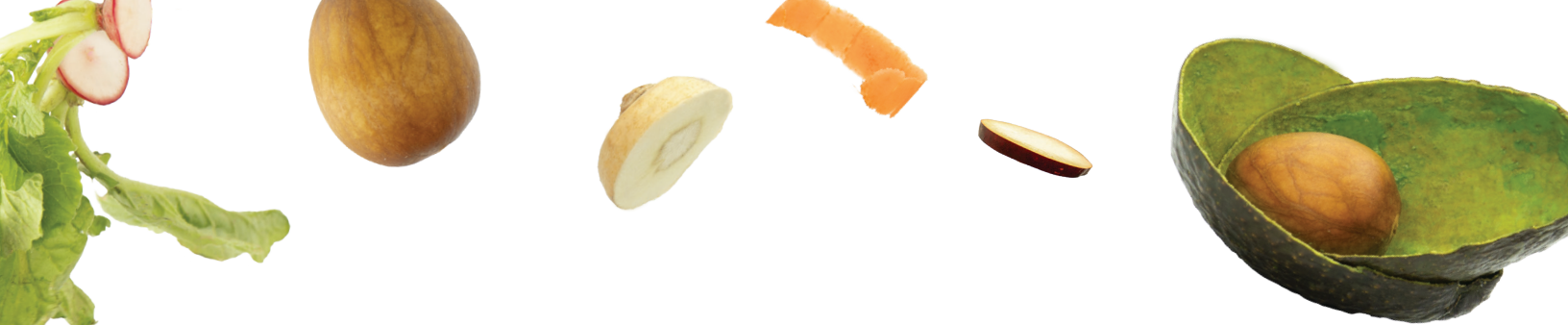
Regular Refreshers: Hold periodic training sessions to reinforce proper practices and introduce any updates.

Incorporate reminders or updates into other regular training they may already do. If your restaurant does beverage training or new menu training when products change, add one to two notes on the composting system in those sessions.

03 CUSTOMER EDUCATION

Online Engagement: Create a social media plan about your efforts and post informational materials around your restaurant. Staff story-telling is a practical way to connect and educate.

Table Tent Cards: Place informational cards on tables explaining the composting program and what can be composted.



04

MONITORING AND FEEDBACK

Bin Inspections: Have a dedicated staff member regularly check bins for contamination. Provide immediate feedback to staff if contamination is found. The best way to continuously monitor bins is to have the dishwashers take ownership of the program if your central food scrap collection is at the dishwashing area.

The best time to inspect the bins is when prepping food in the kitchen for a service and at the end of the day before closing.

05

BIN PLACEMENT AND DESIGN

Strategic Placement: Place compost bins in convenient locations to encourage use, such as near prep stations and dishwashing areas.

Distinctive Bins: Use different colors and clear labels to distinguish compost green bins from black trash bins and recycling blue bins.

06

SIMPLIFY THE SORTING PROCESS

Pre-Sorting: Where possible, pre-sort waste in the kitchen before it reaches the compost bin. This reduces the likelihood of contamination.

Consistent Practices: Ensure that all staff are aware of and follow the same sorting procedures.

07

REGULAR COMMUNICATION

Meetings: Include waste sorting and contamination reduction as regular agenda items in staff meetings.

Updates: Keep staff informed about the program's progress, successes, and areas needing improvement.

08

EFFECTIVE USE OF COMPOSTABLE PRODUCTS

Certified Compostable Items: Ensure that all products labeled as compostable are BPI and CMA certified and suitable for your local composting system.

Eliminate Non-Compostables: Minimize or eliminate the use of non-compostable items that commonly cause contamination, such as ketchup packets, plastic bottles, plastic stir sticks, anything that is inorganic. For a list of field-tested certified compostables, check out the Compost Manufacturer's Alliance accepted list: <https://compostmanufacturingalliance.com/>

09

ENGAGE A GREEN TEAM

Green Champions: Designate a team or individuals responsible for overseeing the program, monitoring bins, and educating others.

Peer Support: Encourage team members to support each other in maintaining low contamination levels.

10

FEEDBACK LOOP WITH HAULERS AND COMPOSTERS

Regular Reports: Request contamination reports from your waste hauler or composting facility.

Collaborate: Work with them to identify common contaminants and adjust practices accordingly.

Implementing these strategies can significantly reduce contamination, ensuring the success and sustainability of your restaurant's food scrap collection program.

For additional support or questions, contact the EcoSafe team at info@ecosafezerowaste.com. Your commitment to sustainability helps reduce landfill waste and promotes a healthier environment for your community!