

Heard the good news?

Cambridge is Starting a Pilot Program for...



CURBSIDE COMPOST PICKUP

In April 2014, the City will begin a one year pilot program for curbside pickup of food scraps from residents. Participation is voluntary and free.

By December 20, 2013, our goal is to recruit 500-800 households in a specific section of North Cambridge. This is an exciting initiative for our community as we become more green and sustainable.

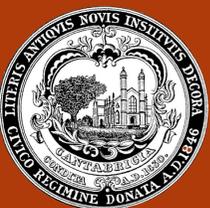
Eligible residences must be in the green area on the map, get City trash service, and your home can be a single family, or a multi-family building with up to 12 units. Please tell your neighbors about the program.

Participating households will get a kitchen container with a year's supply of BioBags, a curbside compost bin (to share at multi-family buildings), free collection on your normal pickup day, and more!

Compost is nature's way of recycling food scraps into excellent soil used to grow healthy and delicious food. Curbside compost pickup is a great way you can reduce waste, protect the climate and help the City control trash costs. Composting is a good thing and you'll be amazed at how little trash remains!



North Cambridge Neighborhood Eligible for the Pilot

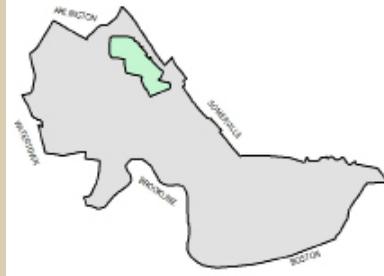


Learn more and sign up at by December 20, 2013:
CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup
617.349.4815 TTY 617.499.9924

This project is funded in part from a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

Starting in April 2014....

Cambridge is starting a one-year pilot program for curbside compost pickup! Participation is voluntary. Please tell your neighbors about the program. The City's goal is to recruit 500-800 households from a specific section of North Cambridge (in green on the map). This is an exciting initiative for the Cambridge community as we become more green and sustainable.

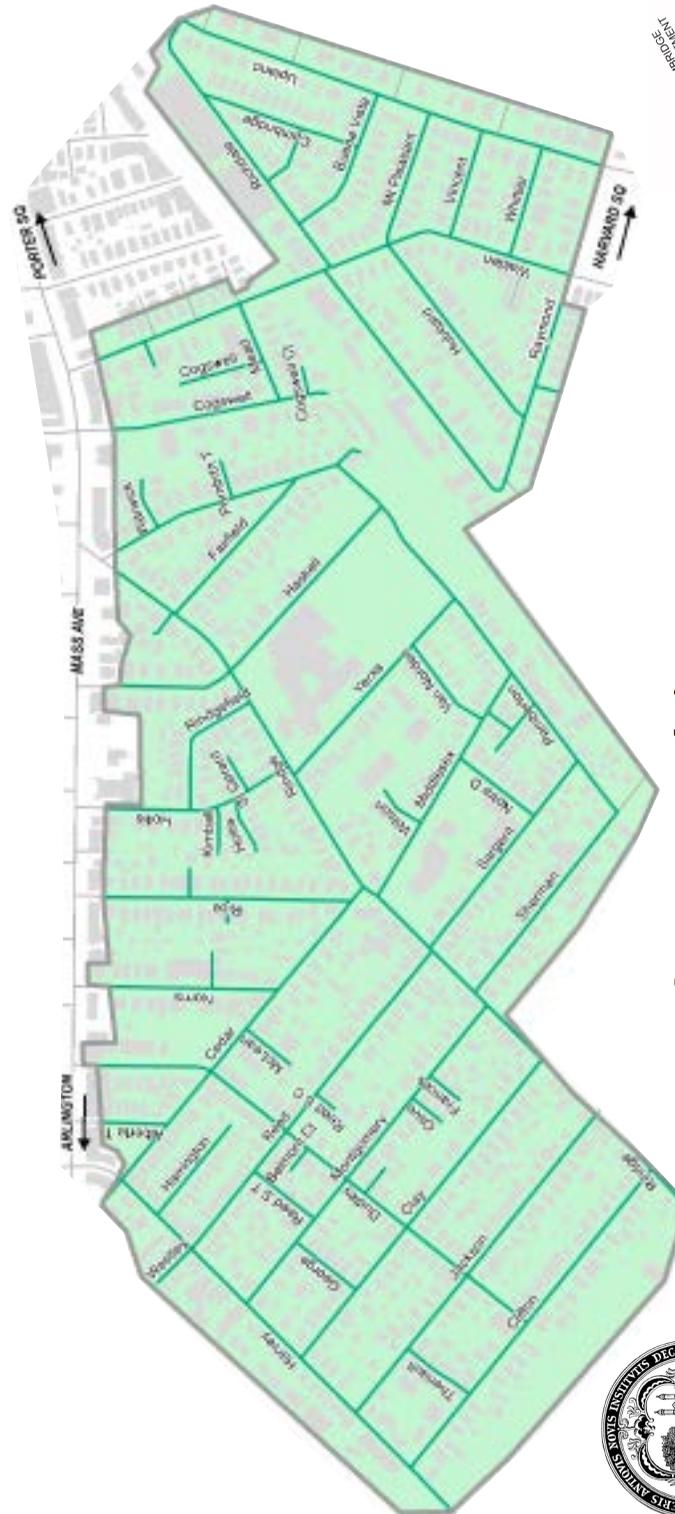


If you want to participate:

- 1** You must live in the green area on the neighborhood map.
- 2** Your residence must get City trash service.
- 3** Your home can be a single family, or a multi-family building with up to 12 units.
- 4** You must complete the "I'm Interested" form at CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup.
- 5** We will confirm your eligibility and be in touch this fall with more details.

**Space is limited.
Sign up by December 20, 2013.**

North Cambridge Neighborhood Eligible for the Curbside Compost Pilot Program



Learn more and sign up at:
CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup

This material was provided through a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to the City of Cambridge. Project partners also include Cambridge School Department, Cambridge Public Library, BioBag USA, and Novamont.



Heard the good news?

**Cambridge Started
a Pilot Program for...**

**CURBSIDE
COMPOST
PICKUP!**



Why Compost?

Composting is nature's way of recycling food scraps. Curbside compost pickup is a great way you can reduce waste, protect the climate and help the City control trash costs. Compost is excellent soil used to grow healthy and delicious food. Farming with compost saves water and reduces pesticides. Composting is a good thing and you'll be amazed at how little trash remains!

**COMPOST
THAT STUFF**

Participating Households Will Get:

-  A green kitchen container to collect food scraps and soiled paper
-  A year's supply of Biobags to line your kitchen container
-  A green curbside compost bin (to share at multi-family buildings)
-  Free collection on your normal pickup day by City crews
-  A few requests during the pilot to answer online surveys
-  Finished compost great for gardens at the Recycling Center Apr-Oct during open hours (147 Hampshire St, Tu/Th 4pm-7:30pm & Sa 9am-4pm)



kitchen container (2.5 gallon)

To Avoid Odor...

The kitchen container is ventilated and the BioBags breathe.

This design lets heat escape and moisture evaporate. This lets food scraps dry out, which slows the rotting process and avoids odor!

The curbside bin is a durable plastic bin on wheels with a secure locking lid.



curbside bin (12, 21, or 32 gallon)

Remember, reducing waste is even better than composting.

Whatever food you love, you can reduce waste and save money! Here are some tips to get you started:

-  **Make It Last**
Storing your food the right way in your fridge, freezer and cupboard will keep it fresh longer.
-  **Portion & Plan**
Plan meals, write (and stick to) a shopping list. Get your portions right and eat the food you buy.
-  **Love Your Leftovers**
Use leftovers for lunch or a base for a new meal. Use up produce in smoothies, soups, frittatas, and casseroles.

What Can Be Composted?



- ✓ **All Food Scraps**
Including vegetable & fruit scraps, coffee grounds, meat & bones, dairy, cereal, seafood, eggshells, nutshells, baked goods, candy, and even spoiled food.
- ✓ **All Soiled Paper**
Including used napkins, paper towels, paper bags, coffee filters, tea bags, waxed paper, and paper sandwich wrappers.
- ✓ **Other Compostables**
Including paper and plastic products certified by the US Composting Council, flowers, houseplants, potting soil, wooden clementine boxes, and pet food.



Learn more and sign up at:
CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup

617.349.4815
TTY 617.499.9924

Do Not Compost:

No grease, no liquids, no diapers or baby wipes, no pet or human waste, no plastic bags or plastic, no metal, glass or styrofoam, no cigarette butts, and no dryer lint or dryer sheets.

Thank you for signing up!

Weekly Pickup of Curbside Compost Starts April 7th...



curbside bin

Thanks for signing up for the City's exciting initiative to collect food scraps for compost pickup. Once you start composting, you'll be amazed how little trash remains! Please see the reverse side for more info and tips.

This pilot will run until March 30, 2015. Multi-family residences: please encourage all your building neighbors to sign up, if they have not yet done so. Pickup is Mondays, same day as recycling and trash. During holiday weeks, pickup is delayed one day.

Line kitchen bin with compostable bags to collect food scraps. The design of the bin and bags, lets heat escape and moisture evaporate, practically eliminating odors. Place full bags of food scraps in curbside bin 2-3 times/week or if you're going away. No loose food scraps in curbside bin. Always latch lid closed. Place curbside bin at curb for weekly pickup, even if it isn't full.

Remember, reducing waste is even better than composting. Whatever food you love, you can reduce waste and save money. Plan ahead when shopping. Store groceries properly to avoid spoilage. Right size portions. Love your leftovers. Trust your senses to check if food is still good.

CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup

617.349.4815

TTY 617-499.9924



This material was provided through a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection to the City of Cambridge. Project partners also include Cambridge School Dept, Cambridge Public Library, BioBag USA, and Novamont.



What to Compost:

✓ All Food Scraps

Vegetable & fruit scraps, coffee grounds, meat & bones, dairy, cereal, seafood, eggshells, nutshells, baked goods, candy, even spoiled food.

✓ All Soiled Paper

Used napkins, paper towels, coffee filters, tea bags, paper bags, waxed paper, paper sandwich wrappers.

✓ Other Compostables

Paper & compostable plastic products certified by the US Composting Council, wooden, clementine boxes, houseplants, potting soil, pet food.



COMPOSTABLE
IN INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES



kitchen bin

Do Not Compost...

No liquids, such as grease or soup. No plastic bags or plastic, diapers, baby wipes, pet or human waste, cigarette butts, metal, glass or styrofoam, dryer lint or dryer sheets.



Helpful Tips...

- ✓ No liquids. Drain excess moisture (i.e. squeeze tea bags).
- ✓ Wrap meat & fish scraps in newspaper or paper bags to prevent odors.
- ✓ Place wooden clementine boxes next to curbside bin at curb.
- ✓ Clean kitchen bin in sink or dishwasher.
- ✓ Clean curbside bin outside and drain liquids onto the grass. Never pour wash water in a catch basin, which goes to the Charles River.



FOOD SCRAPS ONLY

What Can Be Composted?

- ✓ All food scraps in compostable bags
- ✓ All soiled paper
- ✓ Other certified compostable products

Do Not Compost:

No grease, liquids, pet or human waste, plastic bags, metal plastic, glass or styrofoam, or trash.

No loose food scraps.
Wrap meat and fish scraps in newspaper or paper bags to prevent odor. Always latch lid closed.



Store this bin outside, ideally in shade.
Place bin at curb for weekly pickup on your regular day, even if it isn't full.

For details visit: [CambridgeMA.Gov/CompostPickup](https://www.cambridge.gov/compostpickup)

**6 WALL POSTERS
USED AT THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
INFORMATION SESSION**

Can I Participate If I Already Compost At Home?

Yes! In fact, we encourage you to do so. This is a great way to keep other food scraps and soiled paper out of the trash.

The curbside compost program can be a great addition to your home compost system since some materials (such as meat, seafood, dairy, pet food) cannot be composted in a backyard compost system, but they are accepted in the curbside compost pilot program.

If I'm Not Eligible, What Are My Options?

All Cambridge residents have several composting options:

1. Compost At Home...

Many residents compost at home with a backyard bin, or indoors with vermicompost worm bin.

2. Drop-Off Food Scraps... 3 Locations!

City Recycling Center @ 147 Hampshire Street, near Inman Square. Open hours (Tues/Thurs 4pm-7:30pm and Sat 9am-4pm). The compost toters are placed in front of the bin for scrap metal.



Cambridge Community Center @ 5 Calendar Street. The compost toters are kept on Howard Street . Use the combo lock code: 480 to open the toters. Please make sure to replace the locks.

Whole Foods Market @ 115 Prospect Street. Customers may bring food scraps everyday, 7:30am-10:30pm. The compost toters are in the rear of the parking lot on the left.

3. Curbside Pickup By Bicycle

Three local companies offer this service for a fee:
Metro Pedal Power (www.metropedalpower.com)
Bootstrap Compost (www.bootstrapcompost.com)
City Compost (www.citycompost.com)

When Will The Program Begin And End?

The program will run from April 7, 2014 through March 30, 2015 with weekly Monday curbside pickup. During holiday weeks, collection is delayed one day.

Check the online schedule for holidays including New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Patriot's Day, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

How Will The Program Work?

If you are a renter, please tell your landlord about your interest in the program and you both know who will set out the green curbside bin for weekly collection. This person should be the one who sets the trash barrels and recycling totes at the curb for weekly collection.

Throughout the week place food scraps and soiled paper in your kitchen container, lined with a compostable BioBag.

Remove the bag when it gets full or if you will be gone for a few days. Tie it and place in the green curbside bin.

Set your green curbside bin out for weekly pickup, even if it is not full. Place next to your trash and recycling after 6 pm the night before collection or by 7 am on collection day.

A dedicated DPW truck will come by to empty your green curbside bin.



What Will Participating Households Get?

Each participating household will get the following for FREE:

- A green kitchen container to collect food scraps (2.5 gallon)
- A year supply of compostable BioBags to line your kitchen container. 150 bags, enough to tie off bags 2-3 times a week, when it is full or if you will be gone for a few days.
- A green curbside bin. The bin is durable plastic, on wheels, and has a secure locking lid. A 12-gallon bin for single family homes and a 21-gallon bin for multi-family buildings to share among households. Multi-family buildings can request another bin if one is not enough.
- Weekly collection on your normal pickup day by City crews.
- A few requests during the pilot to answer online surveys.
- Finish compost great for gardens available at the Recycling Center April-October during open hours (147 Hampshire St, Tu/Th 4pm-7:30pm & Sat 9am-4pm)

How Can I Avoid Odor And Pests?

The kitchen container is ventilated and the compostable BioBags breathe. This design lets heat escape and moisture evaporate. This lets food scraps dry out, which slows the rotting process and avoids odor.

Important tips:

- Wrap meat, fish or shellfish in newspaper or paper bags first.
- No liquids or grease. Drain excess liquids from food and squeeze out items like tea bags.
- Store the bin outside. Make sure the bin is locked after placing bags of food scraps inside. If possible, store in a shady and well ventilated area.
- Place the bin out at the curb for weekly pickup, even if it isn't full.
- Never place loose food scraps in your curbside bin, or on the ground.
- When needed, rinse your kitchen container, or clean in the dishwasher.
- If needed, clean the curbside bin with soap and water. Drain liquids onto a grassy area. Wash water should never enter a catch basin because it goes straight to the Charles River.

Where Will The Food Scraps & Soiled Paper Go?

A DPW truck will take the food scraps and soiled paper to a large scale composting facility called Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus, Massachusetts (15 miles from Cambridge).

The material is loaded into their in-vessel digester. In 3 days, the material is completely broken down into compost. The digester is a rotating drum 53 feet long, 10 feet in diameter, with a capacity of 150 cubic yards.

The drum turns once every 15 minutes and temperatures reaches between 140-160 degrees. The material is then put into windrows (long neat piles) for four weeks to fully mature. The next stage is to screen the compost and remove any large particles.

The finished compost is sold to farmers, gardeners, and landscapers. The compost can be spread on fields to grow vegetables, used as a soil amendment, turf dressing, erosion control, potted plants or used in heavy soils to increase drainage.

Residents can get small amounts of the finished compost, great for gardens at the Recycling Center from April-October during open hours (Tu/Th 4pm-7:30pm & Sat 9am-4pm). The Center is located in the rear of the Public Works yard at 147 Hampshire St, near Inman Square.



What Can Be Composted In This Program?

All Food Scraps

- ✓ All Vegetable & Fruit Scrap
- ✓ Coffee Grounds
- ✓ Meat Scraps & Bones
- ✓ Dairy Products
- ✓ Seafood & Shells
- ✓ Eggshells & Nutshells
- ✓ Breads, Cereal & Pasta
- ✓ Baked Goods
- ✓ Cookies & Candy
- ✓ Even spoiled food



All Soiled Paper

- ✓ Used Napkins & Paper Towels
- ✓ Paper Bags
- ✓ Coffee Filters
- ✓ Tea Bags & Paper Sugar Packets
- ✓ Waxed Paper & Paper Sandwich Wrappers
- ✓ Paper Clamshell Takeout Containers (i.e. from Whole Foods)

Other Compostables

- ✓ US Composting Council certified Compostable Bags and Products
- ✓ Houseplants, Flowers & Potting Soil
- ✓ Wine Corks & Wooden Coffee Stirrers
- ✓ Wooden Clementine Boxes
- ✓ Pet Food



Do Not Compost:

- × No Grease or Liquids
- × No Diapers or Baby Wipes
- × No Pet or Human Waste
- × No Plastic Bags or Plastic
- × No Metal, Foil, Glass, or Styrofoam
- × No Cigarette Butts
- × No Dryer Lint or Dryer Sheets

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Officials Want a Curbside Compost Pickup Program in Boston

City Councilors will discuss a proposal to introduce a city-run effort to haul away food scraps.

By Steve Annear | Boston Daily | March 26, 2013, 12:40 p.m.

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PHOTO VIA FLICKR AND SZCZEL

Recognizing the environmental benefits of recycling excess food and scraps to be used as fertilizer, Boston officials are eyeing a curbside compost pick-up program so the decaying matter can help landscape city parks, or be sold off to local farmers.

“Compost is rich in nutrients, improves the water-holding capacity of soil and encourages good root structure while reducing or eliminating the need for chemical pesticides, making it a great material for use in gardens, landscaping and agriculture,” according to a petition filed by City Councilors Matt O’Malley and Felix Arroyo.

Trending: The Inconvenient Truth About Olympic Highway Lanes

Going beyond the city’s recycling efforts, the pair of officials wants to implement a pilot program that would collect compost at peoples’ curbsides so it could benefit the local agriculture. According to Arroyo and O’Malley, city-run curbside composting programs have existed in over 90 cities in the country, some for decades, including Portland, Oregon, Seattle, and San Francisco.

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“We did some more research into it...when you see a city like San Francisco, they reduced their trash by 78 percent,” says Arroyo, adding the idea to bring a program to Boston stemmed from a community meeting with Jamaica Plain residents. “In Portland, they got so good at this that they do trash pickup every two weeks, instead of every week, because there isn’t too much trash anymore. We see some potential here as to what’s possible in a large city. Anytime we reduce what’s going into our landfills we have done something very good, and that’s what this is about.”

In 2012, across the Charles River, Cambridge officials kicked-off their own feasibility study with plans to roll-out a compost collection program with curbside pickup at more than 800 participating households. As the idea develops in Cambridge, the city is also looking at 10 sites where they could dump the food waste for composting purposes, something O’Malley and Arroyo would like to mirror. “The finished compost can be used for landscaping in Boston’s parks and gardens or could be sold to local farmers, creating a full circle of food returning to food for Boston,” according to a request for a public hearing about the prospect filed by the city councilors on March 20.

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The full City Council will hear remarks from the duo during a scheduled meeting on Wednesday, March 27, before sending the request to the appropriate committee for a public hearing and review.

Boston already has a program that collects compost from businesses and households, but it isn’t run or funded by the city. Jamaica Plain-based start-up Bootstrap Compost takes trips around Boston by bike, picking up food waste from constituents and contracted business owners. To date, the company has 400 residential customers and 21 commercial customers, and has diverted more than 170,000 pounds of food scraps for composting in the past two years. O’Malley and Arroyo plan on inviting Bootstrap Compost representatives, as well as members of Boston’s Department of Public Works, to the tentative public hearing to discuss the benefits of a city-wide curbside pick-up program.

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Cambridge Takes Food-Scrap Diversion Seriously

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By FRANK CARINI/ecoRI News staff

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Food scrap accounts for at least 10 percent of all municipal solid waste generated in the state, or nearly 900,000 tons annually, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) estimates.

In hopes of lessening the considerable amount of food scrap being needlessly wasted, state officials approved a solid waste disposal ban that, beginning next year, applies to businesses and institutions disposing of a ton or more of food weekly.

In the meantime, the DEP estimates that less than 5 percent of all food scrap generated in Massachusetts is being diverted to composting operations and backyard compost bins. And much of that valuable material likely originates in Cambridge.

Since the early 1990s, the city has been advocating and supporting [backyard composting](#). In 2004, local officials and volunteers began teaching vermicomposting — composting with worms — to residents with limited outdoor

space for a compost pile or bin.

Four years later, in 2008, the city began collecting food scrap at public schools and a few drop-off locations. Today, lunchroom composting is conducted at seven of the city's 13 public schools and there are three **drop-off locations** — the Recycling Center on Hampshire Street, the Cambridge Community Center on Callender Street and at the Whole Foods Market in Central Square.

“A lot of residents didn’t want to wait around for us to start a curbside collection program,” said Randi Mail, the city’s recycling director. “The city was motivated to start these programs by climate protection, reducing our waste stream and to save money.”

The city currently pays \$75 a ton for waste disposal. The three drop-off locations collect about 50 tons of food scrap annually, according to Mail.

Among the materials accepted at these locations are: vegetable and fruit scraps, coffee grounds, filters and tea bags, eggshells, grains and baked goods, meat, fish, bones and cheese wrapped in newspaper or paper bags, food-soiled napkins and paper towels, food-soiled biodegradable paper products, and wine corks.

The city’s Department of Public Works recommends that food scrap be collected in a paper bag, 5-gallon pail or another reusable container.

Among the items not accepted are liquids, grease, Chinese food takeout containers, plastic, Styrofoam, pet waste, diapers and yard waste.

Local residents also have the option of having their food scrap collected by **Metro Pedal Power** or **Bootstrap Compost**. The DPW also funds a residential food-scrap collection program at the Cambridge Community Center.

The city’s food-scrap diversion efforts, however, go beyond residential. In 2006, the city implemented a food-scrap collection program for businesses. Today, 70 businesses separate food scrap from their waste stream.

Save That Stuff, a Charlestown-based recycling hauler, and several other private haulers pick up the food waste and bring it to composting facilities in Massachusetts.

Statewide there are some 30 food and organic material composting operations, with a combined permitted capacity to accept nearly 150,000 tons annually. However, many of these facilities aren’t located near primary food scrap sources and some aren’t being fully utilized.

This April, the city also will begin a curbside pilot program. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) awarded the city a 2.5-year grant for up to \$67,000 to research, plan and possibly implement a pilot curbside food-scrap collection program for residents.

The pilot program, Mail said, will help reduce the city’s greenhouse gas emissions and will help achieve the city’s goals to reduce its waste stream by 30 percent by 2020. The initiative came in response to public demand, which was demonstrated by a March 2011 City Council resolution in support of curbside composting.

About 800 households — from single-family homes up to 12-unit buildings — in the Porter Square/North Cambridge area will participate in the yearlong pilot program. Participating households will receive a food-scrap container and a year’s supply of 3-gallon compostable bags to line the container.

Once full, participants will place the bag in a sturdy plastic curbside bin with a locking lid.

The program will run one day a week for a year. City officials estimate the pilot will keep about 124 tons of food scrap out of Cambridge's waste stream. The city has identified 10 possible compost facilities, and tip fees range from \$40 to \$80 per ton. Sites that could accept loads include Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus, Brick Ends Farm in Hamilton and WeCare Environmental in Marlborough.

If the pilot is successful, a voluntary citywide program would be phased in, according to Mail.

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The Basics of Greywater are Clear: Energy Savings

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Friday, August 2, 2013 at 2:27PM



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By Marc Filippino

Print Page

April 09, 2014 1:08PM

Cambridge rolls out first East Coast compost-pickup program

Monday morning, more than a dozen people stood outside of an Upland Road home, paying a tremendous amount of attention to a garbage truck and a little green bin.

But Monday, April 7, was anything but a normal trash pickup day. The excitement was over the city's new pilot curbside composting program. The project, which will run until March 30, 2015, will pick up compostable items from around 900 residences and households in North Cambridge.

The program is intended to help cut down the city's greenhouse gas emissions and reduce the waste streams by 80 percent in 2050, according to Randi Mail, director of recycling.

"We want to make sure people are participating," Mail said. "We want to see those little green bins; it's going to be a sign of success."

Beginning in October, the Department of Public Works began accepting applications for volunteer residents to participate in the pilot. To lessen trash, participants will throw compostable items, such as food, paper items and items with a compost label (two chasing arrows crossing through a leaf), into a biodegradable bag to be collected weekly. Mail estimates a household could produce up to 10 pounds of compost every week.

"The more [my wife and I] read about the program we found out you could include meat and bones and paper towels, which is great because paper towels are the majority of our weekly trash," said Henry Feild, 28, whose green bin acted as the inaugural compost disposal during the ceremony.

"I think this will cut our trash in half. We're down to a bag of trash a week and I think we can get down to a half a bag," Feild added.

Trash reduction, one bin at a time

During a practice run of the pilot program a week prior, participating households produced a total of six tons of trash, according to Mail. Over the next year, Mail hopes curbside composting will reduce that number from anywhere from 10 to 50 percent.

The DPW is closely tracking the progress of the pilot program, sending someone out on the weekly route to see how many households remember to put out their composting bins and how much is in each. The department is extending a helping hand by aggregating an email list for the participants and reminding them to put their bin out onto the street, along with their trash and recycling.

The residents selected for the pilot run were from North of Upland Road to Harvey Street. Each household is required to be less than 13 units so the city may establish best practices for larger multi-family buildings.

But for those in North Cambridge who weren't picked for the pilot program, DPW set up a drop-off composting site located at St. Peter's Field on Sherman Street.

Once all the neighborhood's compost is rounded up, it's taken to an in-vessel digester at Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus. After a roughly five-week process, the compost that was once in Cambridge residents' bins becomes rich soil available for purchase.

And while Mail is excited about the possibility of reducing trash and increasing compost, she hopes the pilot program will help reduce food waste in its entirety.

"It's shocking to know that 40 percent of the food produced in this country is wasted," Mail said. "This is a real opportunity to reduce waste, because composting is important, but it's secondary to reducing waste in the first place."

Composting across the country

Cambridge is one of the first cities on the East Coast to pilot a curbside compost program, according to the DPW. But composting has become popular elsewhere in North America — from San Francisco and Seattle to Madison, Wis., and Toronto.

Madison, which is closest to Cambridge's population with 233,209 people, rolled out its curbside composting pilot program in 2011. Madison and Cambridge have a similar number of participants with 500 Madison households and six businesses. Their numbers will increase in July to 1,600 households and 30 businesses.

Madison's recycling coordinator, George Dreckman, said the feedback from volunteers in the city's pilot have been positive, with residents claiming they're not putting out as much trash.

"People want a strong environmental effort and have really embraced this," Dreckman said.

The pilot will continue until 2017 in order to get the data required to adequately roll out a fulltime program. The city is even looking at several locations to put in a digester within or close to Madison's borders.

But Madison's successes haven't come without some tweaks. Dreckman said the program originally allowed dirty diapers before regulations started to classify it as sewage sludge.

And even with diapers banned, Dreckman said residents have to contend with a strong smell from compost bins, and even maggots during summer months.

"This is yucky stuff and it's in our garbage already, but in trash it's broken up with other things," Dreckman said. "Now you're concentrating slimy stuff in one spot. Maggots get a lot more noticeable. We joke that if we didn't haul it out to the transfer station, it would haul itself out."

Mail believes Cambridge's pilot design has helped avoid that problem by providing bins that expose the compost to air, drying it out and decreasing the smell.

Feild said he's yet to see what smells the project may bring.



Mayor David Maher, left, and City Manager Richard Rossi kick off Cambridge's pilot curbside composting program by dumping a compost barrel at 720 Upland Road. Courtesy photo/Chris Neil.

"It will be interesting to test," he said.

To contact staff writer Marc Filippino, email him at mfilippino@wickedlocal.com or on Twitter - @mfilippino.

<http://cambridge.wickedlocal.com/article/20140409/NEWS/140406057>

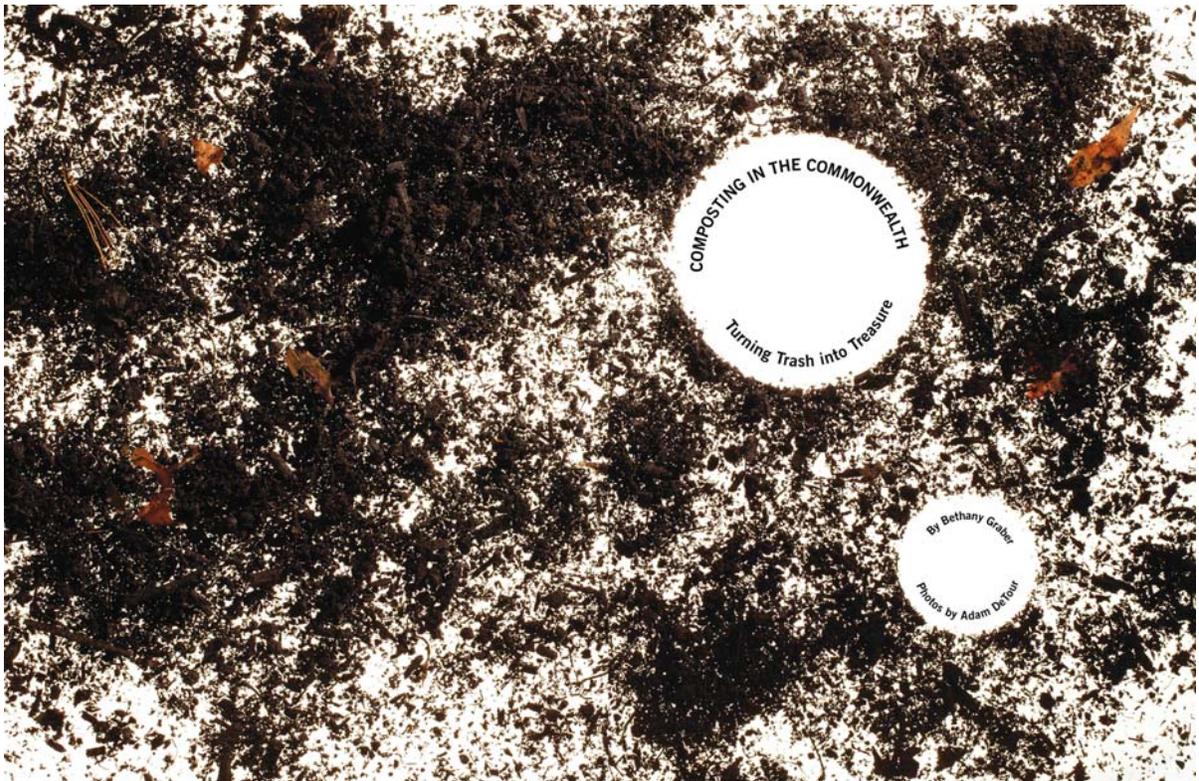
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CELEBRATING THE ABUNDANCE OF LOCAL FOOD

COMPOSTING TRASH IN THE COMMONWEALTH: TURNING TRASH INTO TREASURES



By Bethany Graber / Photos by Adam DeTour

Composting is quite literally the act of turning one man’s trash into another man’s treasure. The beauty of it is that we are all the “other man.” We all stand to benefit from it. Composting is the new frontier in the recycling revolution, and it has finally begun to take hold in and around Boston.

The multi-step process of composting begins with the separating out of green waste from other trash and recyclables. Green waste is all that is compostable: food scraps, lawn clippings, coffee grinds, and tea bags (among other things). This organic matter is then put into an environment

where it is broken down with the help of naturally occurring organisms such as microbes and earthworms. After a gestation period of anywhere from a few weeks to a couple of months, the waste completely decomposes, becoming nutrient-rich compost that can be repurposed back into the earth for gardening and growing.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, food makes up the largest amount, about 21%, of the waste that is stuffing municipal landfills annually. Aside from the fact that we are wasting far too much food, neglecting to take advantage of an opportunity to recycle it through composting seems foolish, and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) agrees.

As of October 1, 2014, the Commercial Food Waste Ban went into effect, which the MassDEP website states is a “ban on disposal of commercial organic wastes by businesses and institutions that dispose of one ton or more of these materials per week.” The goal is to reduce the amount of waste produced, while simultaneously encouraging businesses to take advantage of composting opportunities that are becoming more readily available.

It is companies such as Save That Stuff Inc. in Boston, Bootstrap Compost in Jamaica Plain, and Black Earth Compost in Gloucester that are helping promote and facilitate these opportunities. Thanks to these folks and others like them, it is becoming that much easier for Massachusetts residents—from households to restaurants to businesses—to responsibly dispose of organic waste. These composting pioneers are doing the majority of the dirty work. They pick-up and transport the food scraps and green waste, coordinate with local area farms to turn them into compost, and often bestow that compost back on the community. All it takes is keeping organic trash separate from everything else.

Igor Kharitonov, one of the co-founders of Bootstrap Compost, explains his company’s processes as a “great, sustainable closed loop system.” The proof of this exists in the provision of finished compost to those who have given their organics to create it, as well as the business’ environmentally conscious processes. Simple things, like giving subscribers recycled buckets for collecting their scraps and using bikes for pickups instead of trucks whenever possible, are what make Bootstrap and others like them sustainable and holistic in their mission to reduce unnecessary waste.

At their core, Kharitonov says Bootstrap’s goal is to always be “empowering local food systems through our composting.” They pride themselves on their policy of educating the community on the value of composting in addition to providing a service. They are a grassroots operation dedicated to the “cycle of food life,” encouraging people to compost, even if not with them. They, along with Save that Stuff, are providing educational material at Boston area farmers markets and food events whenever possible, both recognizing the paramount importance of an informed constituency to facilitate change.





Black Earth Compost is doing similar work in northeastern Massachusetts, serving both residential and commercial customers. Conor Miller, one of the co-owners of Black Earth, eloquently describes the company's primary objective as "to collect wasted food and other organic waste...to create the highest quality compost we can, which is then used by farmers and gardeners to make more food out of it." The big picture is about diverting from landfills those things that can be recycled in a more environmentally conscious way. Miller was keen to explain the value of companies like Black Earth as essential to the ever-growing composting movement. "Organics haulers like us, who are directly tied in to the final product (compost), care very much about the quality of the material that is picked up" he says. "Those incentives don't apply to regular trash companies."

Companies like Black Earth and Bootstrap are not just enabling the composting movement, but empowering it. Thanks to their dedication and pioneering, whole municipalities are now being served, many of which have implemented town-wide composting programs.

Both the City of Salem and the City of Cambridge have in the last year put into operation pilot curbside composting programs. The Salem pilot began this past April, and they currently have 850 households enrolled. However, the two-year MassDEP grant that is providing their funding allows them the capacity to serve as many as 1,500 families. Black Earth is doing the pick-ups and transporting the scraps to Brick Ends Farm in South Hamilton, a composting facility that has been functioning since 1975. Salem's city manager Julie Rose notes that "the program has had steady growth," and is likely to hit its 1,500 household capacity by 2016.

Cambridge has implemented a similar residential pilot program, also with the aid of MassDEP grant funding. They launched their program in April as well, and currently there are 600 households participating. Championed by Randi Mail, Recycling Director for Cambridge, the pilot has already been met with great success and enthusiasm.

Mail is a woman excited to talk trash, and I don't mean the kind you hear when the Yankees are in town. She is also a woman of action. Not only has she helped to get Cambridge's curbside program off the ground, she has also organized compost pickups for local businesses and facilitated drop off locations around the city to provide all Cambridge residents the option to responsibly recycle their compostables. A longtime advocate of decreasing organic waste through education, Mail was a catalyst in setting up the "Food to Flowers" composting program in 9 out of the 13 public schools in the district. Her hard work and dedication have put her in a position to now be a resource to other towns and communities across the Commonwealth hoping to engage in this recycling revolution.

Cambridge works with Save That Stuff Inc. who picks up their food scraps and brings them to Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus for processing. The finished compost is then brought back to Cambridge and can be picked up at locations around the city. Mail surveyed her constituents and learned that not only were they interested in recycling their organic waste, they were also thrilled to have access to the finished product of organic composting soil to put back into their own gardens. "The goal is to reduce waste as much as possible through maximizing recycling, composting, and getting residents to reduce waste in the first place," says Mail, and it is her hope that the city will commit to continuing the program once the pilot is finished. "This is a habit we are forming in the household, and we don't want to suddenly reverse that message."





Ideally, at the end of their pilots Cambridge and Salem will have gained enough steam to emulate the town-wide, town-endorsed curbside program of Hamilton. Gretel Clark, Chair of the Hamilton Recycling Committee, has worked tirelessly since 2008 to set the necessary wheels in motion for the town to get its formalized composting system off the ground.

Clark credits “extremely serendipitous circumstances” for getting Hamilton to where it is with their composting. The program was born out of an appeal to increase recycling and reduce waste in the town, and as Clark was petitioning the selectman for these changes, Peter Britton, owner of Brick Ends Farm (which is right in Hamilton) began appearing at her Recycling Committee’s meetings. Briggs, in support of Clark’s efforts, offered up his services to help smooth the town’s path towards composting. The last piece of the puzzle to get the project off the ground was Hiltz Disposal, who willingly provided cost effective hauling from the curbsides to the farm. Clark recognized how lucky it was to have this perfect storm of “people willing to go the extra nine yards to prove to the town it could work.” And it did.

Hamilton ran two pilot programs, the first with just 74 households in 2009; the second the following year with increased participation to include 600 households (which is when their neighboring town of Wenham got in on the action). Each house received its own 13-gallon compost bin to fill, which Hiltz picked up when they did trash pickups in specially designed dual body trucks to keep the green waste separate from the solid waste, and then deposited the scraps for processing at Brick Ends Farm. The process was beautifully streamlined thanks to the dedication and collaboration between the town and the contractors. It was a resounding success.

The participants in the program were surveyed and said they would be devastated if it ended, saying that they would even be willing to pay an additional recycling fee for it to continue. The town was able to save a significant amount of money in trash pick-up fees because waste was reduced so significantly as people were consciously recycling. The benefits were undeniable, and the town voted to implement the program for everyone in 2012. Their success was a motivator, Clark explains. “It’s been a domino effect. All these towns around us started implementing programs also.” Wenham, Ipswich, and Manchester have all jumped on the bandwagon.

Following the example of places like California, Oregon, and Canada that are all ahead of the curve, Massachusetts is stepping up its composting game. With the North Shore leading the charge, and the rest of the state falling in line, it is only a matter of time before composting comes to a city near you. In addition to the new Commercial Food Waste Ban, this fall will also see the inauguration of Project Oscar (which one could assume is a nod to a certain trashcan-dwelling cast member of Sesame Street), the first residential composting program in Boston proper.

While the city is not yet on par with some of its neighbors, it is making strides with this program that is part of Mayor Walsh’s “Greenovate” initiative. Two major compostable scrap collection sites will be set up for residents of East Boston and the North End to drop off their organic waste. This community approach to composting is an innovative way to encourage responsible recycling in big cities.

Cities, towns, businesses, restaurants, and schools across the Commonwealth are getting on the green bandwagon; helping to divert thousands of pounds of waste from landfills through composting. All it takes is an additional moment’s thought to remember to separate green waste from solid waste. Just a moment to turn your trash into treasure.

—

Bethany Graber is a recent graduate of the Boston University Gastronomy program, an occasional contributor to the *Boston Globe*, and the always author of the blog winedinerepeat.com. She is a lover of coffee and a glutton for pastry. Find her [@winedinerepeat](https://twitter.com/winedinerepeat).

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SMM Web Academy Webinar Series:

Cupertino CA and Cambridge MA: Tips for How Communities Can Successfully Engage Businesses to Divert Food Scraps

Description:

The webinar will feature communities from opposite coasts -- Cupertino, California (pop 60K) and Cambridge, Massachusetts (pop. 106K). In both communities, actions taken by the cities incentivized food scrap diversion that led to successful diversion programs.

In December, 2013, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) presented Cupertino with a Food Recovery Challenge national award for innovation in reducing food waste. Cupertino teamed up with its waste hauler, Recology South Bay, and EPA's Pacific Southwest office to conduct outreach to and assist local grocers and markets recover food scraps. One of the local grocers, Marina Food, is now diverting an estimated 520 tons of food scraps annually from entering landfills. And between 2011 and 2012, Cupertino experienced an increase of over 2,000 tons of food scraps diversion, 75 percent originating from the commercial sector. The City has also leveraged its outreach to achieve other benefits, such improved stormwater compliance, by helping businesses maintain cleaner trash bins through use of separate compost bins for food scraps and associated packaging.

The City of Cambridge has been long pursued diversion of organics from the waste stream motivated by their goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reducing solid waste. Their efforts have helped prepare for the upcoming October 1, 2014 Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) solid waste disposal ban that would apply to businesses and institutions disposing of one ton or more of food scraps per week. In 2006 the city sought to implement food scraps diversion at its public schools but there was virtually no collection infrastructure. To build the route density, the city partnered with a local hauler, Save That Stuff, to implement a food-scrap collection program for

Reducing Food Waste in Cupertino

EPA has recognized the City of Cupertino with EPA's 2013 Food Recovery Challenge Award for Innovation. Cupertino teamed up with its waste hauler, Recology, and EPA's Food Recovery Challenge program to work with local grocers and markets, including Marina Food to reduce food waste and divert to composting.

In 2010, Cupertino and Recology agreed to add a stipulation to its franchise agreement to keep 75% of community-generated waste out of landfills by 2015, a 10% increase from 2010 levels. Reducing food waste is a key component of this plan. More than 2,000 tons of food waste has been diverted from landfills since the city amended its franchise agreement. Also, the city has made significant progress toward its 75% goal and has seen a 6% increase of material reused, recycled, or composted, rather than sent to landfills. Marina Food alone will divert an estimated 520 tons of food waste annually from entering landfills

Cupertino's innovative approaches to reducing waste

businesses which today also services eight of the city's 13 public schools and 70+ businesses. In 2013, 50+ tons of food scraps were collected from the participating schools and city buildings, and 60_ tons were collected from four drop-off locations for residents that accept food scraps. Residents also can arrange for bicycle pickup of food scraps by local companies including Metro Pedal Power and Bootstrap Compost.

provide a model for other communities and grocers to follow.

See video clip  [EXIT Disclaimer](#)

In April, 2014, Cambridge began a 500-800 household residential pilot for curbside collection. The City is hauling for the curbside residential pilot, and to date, participating households are averaging almost 7 pounds per week of food scraps, 97 percent of all green bins are set at the curb weekly and the City estimates an 85 percent capture rate of food scraps in the trash at participating households.

Video: [Cupertino CA & Cambridge MA: Tips for How Communities Can Successfully Engage Businesses to Divert Food Scraps](#)  [EXIT Disclaimer](#)

Slide Presentation, July 24, 2014 - [Cupertino CA & Cambridge MA: Tips for How Communities Can Successfully Engage Businesses to Divert Food Scraps \(PDF\)](#) (7 pp, 643 Kb. [about PDFs](#))

Speakers:

Cheri Donnelly, Environmental Programs Manager, Cupertino Public Works Department, Cupertino, CA: Cheri joined the City in March 2008 and is responsible for both the stormwater management compliance program as well as the integrated waste management and diversion (recycling and composting) programs.

Slide Presentation, July 24, 2014 - [Successfully Engaging Business to Divert Food Scraps \(PDF\)](#) (15 pp, 2.82 Mb, [about PDFs](#))

Randi Mail, Recycling Director, Cambridge, MA: Randi joined the City in 2002 working to encourage people to consume less, reuse and donate materials, and recycle what cannot be eliminated or re-used. She oversees weekly curbside recycling collection that serves 45,000 households, City buildings, and schools; operation of a Recycling Center open to residents and small businesses; public education efforts.

Slide Presentation, July 24, 2014 - [Compost that Stuff \(PDF\)](#) (13 pp, 4.42 Mb, [about PDFs](#))

Food Waste Collection Innovations

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Source separating food waste for diversion to composting and anaerobic digestion is in full swing, leading to innovations in equipment to service the programs.

Nora Goldstein
BioCycle July 2014, Vol. 55, No. 6, p. 46

As more food waste diversion programs roll out in the residential and commercial sectors, manufacturers and suppliers are responding with new collection and container tools. The weight and moisture content of food waste have led to innovations in equipment design and operation. An increase in residential food waste collection programs — and the need to service curbside carts — are creating other opportunities for product development.



Perkins' Food Waste Lifter slides the cart straight up over the loading edge of the container. This keeps the tilting pivot close to the cart's center of gravity, creating a constricted rotating arc and avoiding spillage.

Director of Product Management in Wastequip's Technical Products Division. "The compactor can be fed through a chute located inside the store. And because food waste is so wet and heavy, compaction with this material isn't nearly as important as it is with dry waste."

Warren adds that one focus of the company's new Precision Series compactors is "user-friendliness." This

At WasteExpo in April 2014, vendors were showcasing new equipment specifically for food waste collection. Perkins Manufacturing Company, for example, launched its Model D6565 Food Waste Lifter "designed especially for dumping food waste," according to the brochure. The D6565 introduces a unique "geometry" that slides the carts straight up over the loading edge of the collection container, "keeping the tilting pivot point close to the cart's center of gravity, accomplishing a constricted rotating arc, and therefore emptying the cart without spillage," explains Cheryl Waite, President of Perkins Manufacturing. "This is the first time we have employed this unique geometry." The D6565 can lift up to 500 pounds, using any ANSI (American National Standards Institute) Type B cart.

Waite adds that the faceplate on the lifter was enlarged in all directions to provide more surface area for the cart to rest on and give more support to the carts. "Food waste carts are very heavy and they usually tend to rock side to side as they are being lifted," she explains. "This can cause the bottom of the carts to deform. By enlarging the faceplate (all around), we are preventing these issues, the load remains stable as it is lifted and the carts do not get deformed."

Another product introduction on the show floor was Wastequip's Precision Series 265IP self-contained compactor for "ground-fed or walk-up fed" wet waste applications such as food waste. The unit's 2 cubic yard (cy) feed hopper can be equipped with a cart lifter that is powered by the compactor itself. Compactor sizes range from 16- to 35-cy. "A grocery or big box store that generates 60 cy/week of food waste would go with one of the larger-sized units," notes Kirk Warren,

includes simpler controls with a push-button start, automatic maintenance alerts and more open space to access cylinders, rods and other components that require servicing.

Residential Collection

On the residential food waste collection side, conversations on the show floor discussed the slow but seemingly steady pace of curbside programs being rolled out in the U.S. "Everything we see in the U.S. is a crawl, walk, run approach," notes John Sebranek, Marketing Manager, Environmental Division at Orbis Corporation. "Municipalities are starting out with pilot programs to test the waters. Anecdotally, the two main reasons we've seen for the pilots are: 1) They want to be sure enough infrastructure is in place to process the food waste and 2) Residents will accept the program. Communities will test curbside food waste collection in a couple of neighborhoods with different demographics. Often, because of the limited quantity of food waste collected, they can afford to send it to a processing facility further away."



Wastequip's new self-contained compactor for wet waste has a 2-cubic yard feed hopper (on far left).

Orbis' composting product line includes a 12-gallon Green Bin2 Organics recycling bin, and a 21-gallon size. Because many municipalities in Canada have adopted residential food waste programs, modifications to existing collection equipment and systems, as well as new product introductions, are often influenced by the experiences of Canadian municipalities. "One trend we are seeing in Canada is the desire for curbside food waste collection carts that are compatible with automated and semiautomated lifting equipment," adds Sebranek. "Both the City of Toronto and the Region of Peel in Ontario have requested proposals from vendors for a new cart like that. Both plan to deliver them to residents in the fall of 2015. In addition, they are looking for carts to keep pests out, but unlock when dumped by an automated system." Orbis has responded to the bids and is developing an organics cart that can be used with automated and semiautomated collection.

In terms of designing programs that encourage household participation, a three-pronged approach that includes a kitchen countertop container, compostable bag liners for the containers and a curbside cart has proven successful in both pilot and full-scale programs. In April 2014, the City of Cambridge, Massachusetts initiated a curbside pilot in which 600 households are currently participating. This is phase two of a project partly funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. Phase one was a feasibility study. Design of the pilot also benefitted from the city's experience running a residential food scraps drop-off program at four locations (two of the sites opened in 2008). Participation in the pilot is voluntary; single-family households as well as multiunit buildings (up to 12 units) are included. "These are households in a specific section of North Cambridge on our Monday collection route," explains Randi Mail, Recycling Director for the City of Cambridge. "We are using an empty city packer truck to collect the food scraps."

One lesson learned from the residential food scraps drop-off program is that compostable bag liners for the kitchen containers are "critical," says Mail. "We didn't introduce the drop-off program with bags, and heard complaints about the 'yuck' factor, rodent concerns and smells. So for the curbside pilot, we wanted to emphasize use of compostable liners to address rodents, cleanliness and odors. Over the years, we also had tried out different containers and bags in our own homes and liked the Max Air ventilated container and the BioBags. Our grant for the pilot was somewhat limited, so we sought donations from vendors to reduce some of the equipment costs. BioBag USA donated a total of 800 Max Air buckets and a year's supply of liners for each household."

The Max Air containers are ventilated on all sides, including the top and bottom. The BioBags, made from Novamont's Mater-Bi® resin, are designed to breathe naturally, which, according to the manufacturer, enables moisture to evaporate. This helps to minimize odors and reduce the weight of the food scraps set out.

Resident Responses

Cambridge's curbside pilot helps meet two of the city's sustainability goals — a waste reduction goal of 30 percent by 2020, and 80 percent by 2050, and climate protection. "The city's Climate Protection Plan views curbside compost as a strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions," adds Mail. "And after 13 weeks of the

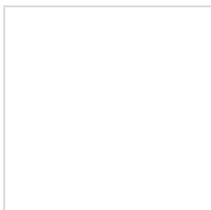
pilot program, we're seeing that participating households are diverting 33 percent of their trash through composting — an average of about 7 lbs/household/week. That is about an 80 percent capture rate of food scraps generated. In educational materials the City explains what to compost, but also how to reduce food waste in the first place."

In addition to all food scraps, households can include soiled paper (napkins, paper towels, wax paper), pizza boxes and BPI-certified compostable products. Single-family households and 2-family unit housing received 12-gallon Orbis Green Bin2 curbside carts; 3-unit and up to 12-unit buildings were given one 21-gallon Orbis cart. Setout rate of the carts has been about 90 percent each week of all green bins distributed. The carts are manually unloaded into the city's packer truck. Public Works staff surveyed pilot participants in May to get feedback on the program to date. "Over 90 percent of households are pleased with the program; only 4 households have dropped out since it started," reports Mail. "Two-thirds of the households are producing one 13-gallon bag of trash or less per week, 50 percent say their trash weighs less and 45 percent report that their trash smells better."

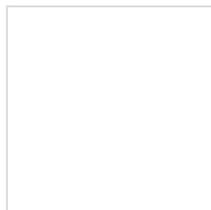
Households also provided feedback on the city's most effective methods of outreach for the pilot. Word-of-mouth, an emailed newsletter and A-frame signs that were placed in the neighborhood were all cited as effective tools. Staff believe most residents are participating in the pilot because of the "feel-good factor," especially related to addressing environmental concerns. "We don't have a pay-as-you-throw program in Cambridge, so understanding why residents opt to participate is important," adds Mail. The year-long pilot ends in March 2015.

Collected organics are composted at Rocky Hill Farm in Saugus, Massachusetts (about 90 minutes round-trip from Cambridge). Rocky Hill has two rotary drum vessels that are used for an initial composting phase (3 days at about 140°F). Next, materials are composted in windrows, followed by final curing. "The compostable bags are fully breaking down," she notes. The tipping fee at Rocky Hill Farm is \$55/ton, versus \$75/ton at the solid waste transfer station used for the City of Cambridge's trash. "We are definitely achieving avoided disposal savings, which help with the economics of residential food waste collection," says Mail. "The hauling distance is clearly a big variable. If the round trip was 30 minutes in total, which is the distance to the transfer station, we could potentially add a lot more households."

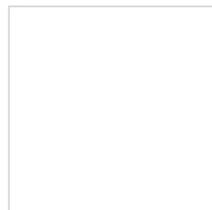
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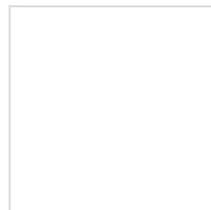
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DID YOU KNOW: Cambridge Is Giving Composting A Try

TOPICS: Cambridge Department Of Public Works

Composting Trash



POSTED BY: [EMILY CASSEL](#) MARCH 10, 2015

Composting: It's not just for hippies anymore! More and more people, including organizations [like the EPA](#), have realized that disposing of food matter this way enriches and cleans contaminated soil while preventing pollution.

Still, it can be a little stinky to keep a composting bin in your own backyard, which is why Cambridge kicked off a pilot curbside composting program last year. The initiative began in North Cambridge last April and currently has more than 600 participants. It was initially planned to continue through the end of this month, though it looks like the deadline has **actually been extended through October 26.**

In a Department of Public Works video from last May, the city's recycling director, Randi Mail, explained that the program helps Cambridge meet two important and distinct goals. First, Mail said, composting reduces waste. Perhaps more importantly, she pointed out that getting rid of food this way can reduce greenhouse gas emissions that lead to climate change.

Interested in learning more? Hear the city's composting plans—including what Mayor David Maher has to say about recycling and where the compost travels after it's collected in Cambridge—in the video below. And if you're interested in taking part in the pilot program yourself, you can find more detailed information at cambridgeMA.gov/compostpickup.

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Cambridge Curbside Compost Pilot Program

EVENTS CALENDAR



JULY 2015						
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1	2

WE D 01 Women Of Vision: Artwork By The National Association Of Women Artists, MA Chapter

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July 1 @ 6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

TH U 02 2015 Summer Music Series: Christina And Fran

July 2 @ 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

TH U 02 Passim Presents: FREE Summer Concert Series At Harvard Square

July 2 @ 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm