

# Food Scraps Drop-off

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Who can participate in this program?

The food scraps drop-off program is for residents who are recycling food scraps at home. The program is open to residents of Washington and Ramsey counties. **Free starter kits and compostable bags are only available to Washington County residents. Limit 1 kit per household.**

### Do you accept food scraps from businesses?

No, food scraps are not accepted from businesses. Visit [BizRecycling.com](http://BizRecycling.com) for details on business recycling.

### How do I get started?

- 1 Sign up online & pick-up a free starter kit!** [www.co.washington.mn.us/foodscraps](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/foodscraps)  
Starter kits are available to Washington County residents only. Kits include a 2 gallon kitchen pail and 10 compostable bags. Limit 1 kit per household.
- 2 Start collecting food scraps at home**  
Collect food scraps in a compostable bag inside of your kitchen pail and tie off the bag when full. See yes/no list on page 2.
- 3 Bring bagged food scraps to a drop-off site**  
Visit a county site during normal operating hours for self-serve drop-off. Replacement bags are available. To ensure there are enough bags for everyone, please only take the number of bags you drop off. See [www.co.washington.mn.us/foodscraps](http://www.co.washington.mn.us/foodscraps) for drop-off locations.

### How often can I drop off food scraps?

You can drop off food scraps as often as you like during operating hours.

### Do I need to use a compostable bag?

A compostable bag (either BPI certified compostable or paper bag) is required if bagging your food scraps. Plastic bags are not compostable and are considered a contaminant at the commercial composting facilities that process the food scraps.

### Will this smell and attract pests?

Odors will be similar to regular trash and will not attract pests if managed properly. Dropping off your food scraps on a weekly basis will help minimize odor and pests.

### Can I put yard waste in with my food scraps?

No. Please keep food scraps separate from yard waste. Search the [Disposal Directory](#) to find a list of yard waste drop-off locations.

### How are food scraps recycled?

The food scraps collected are recycled at a local facility and turned into compost.

# Food Scraps Drop-off Frequently Asked Questions

## What materials are accepted?

### Food

- Fruit and vegetables
- Meat, fish, and bones
- Dairy products
- Eggs and egg shells
- Bread, pasta, beans, and rice
- Nuts and shells
- Coffee grounds, filters, and tea bags
- Animal and pet food

### Non-recyclable paper

- Paper towels, napkins, and tissues
- Pizza delivery boxes
- Dirty paper bags

### Certified compostable products

- BPI certified compostable paper and plastic cups, plates, bowls, utensils, and containers
- Look for the BPI logo to ensure it is compostable



### Other residential compostable items

- Hair, fur, and nail clippings
- Cotton balls and swabs with paper stems (must not have been used with chemicals)
- Houseplants and flowers

## What materials are **NOT** accepted?

- Yard waste
- Animal and pet waste, litter, or bedding
- Dead animals
- Diapers
- Cleaning or baby wipes
- Dryer lint and dryer sheets
- Items that can be recycled (cartons, glass, metal, paper, plastic)
- Frozen food boxes
- Styrofoam™
- Rubber
- Wood

## Quick Tips for Storage and Transport

### Use a rigid tote or pail to transport bags

Compostable bags start to break down sooner than you think. Using a rigid container that can be emptied and returned helps avoid spills and leaks in your vehicle.

### Avoid plastic bags

Plastic bags are not accepted. They are very difficult to empty and frequently too dirty to recycle. If you don't have a tote, try using a paper grocery bag instead. They should hold up for the trip and are compostable.

### Freeze it

If you're concerned about odors during transport, you can always freeze your bags.

### Seal it

If you're worried about pests, use a 5-gallon pail with a tight seal or a galvanized steel can with locking lid. Always keep it stored in a cool dry place.

