

Additional Yard Waste and Food Scrap Information

Getting Started with Food Scrap Recycling

1. Select a kitchen collection container that suits your needs.

- Ceramic or stainless steel containers made especially for food scrap collection, and sold at kitchen shops.
- Paper grocery bags, recycle the bag along with the food scraps.
- Reusable containers such as a yogurt container or coffee can with a lid. Must be dumped out of the container into your yard waste cart.

2. Know what are acceptable and unacceptable items for Food Scrap Recycling

Acceptable

- Food Scraps
 - Meat, fish, poultry, bones
 - Dairy products (i.e. yogurt, cottage cheese, etc.)
 - Vegetable and fruit trimmings
 - Egg shells
 - Bread
 - Pasta
 - Coffee grounds
 - Table scraps
 - Solid food leftovers
 - Paper coffee filters and tea bags
 - Greasy pizza delivery boxes
- Food-Soiled Paper
 - Uncoated paper plates and cups
 - Uncoated paper food bags
 - Pizza boxes
 - Food-soiled paper towels and napkins
 - Shredded paper
 - Paper egg carton
 - Paper grocery bags containing food scraps
- Yard Waste
 - Grass clippings and leaves
 - Twigs, branches and roots from pruning
 - Tree and shrub trimmings
 - Non-noxious weeds
 - Tree branches (under 4" long, 4" in diameter)
 - Houseplants

Unacceptable

- Plastic-coated containers (i.e. milk and ice cream containers)
- Plastic coated paper (i.e. plates, cups and bowls)
- Plastic of any kind
- Grease or liquids
- Pet waste

3. **Empty your kitchen container when full and empty it regularly.**

When the weather is warm, and when a lot of food is collected, it's better to empty the kitchen container into the yard cart every few days.

Tips on keeping your yard waste cart odor and pest free:

Prevention is the best cure to avoiding odors, insects and rodents. If you begin experiencing difficulties with odors or pests, below are some tips for dealing with existing problems and preventing future problems.

- Use a kitchen container with a tight-fitting lid and/or a carbon filter.
- DO use compostable bags. They are compostable and are marked with either "ASTM D-6400" or "compostable" on the label.
- Do NOT use bags labeled "biodegradable" or "made from recycled materials."
- Keep food scraps in a bucket or container in the fridge or freezer until close to collection day.
- Rinse out your kitchen container after emptying it.
- Line the kitchen container with a scrap of cardboard, paper bag or paper towel.
- Sprinkle baking soda in the kitchen container and the food waste cart to absorb odors.
- Spray the inside of your cart and cart lid with a vinegar/water solution.
- Keep your cart clean. A small layer of shredded paper or newspaper can absorb liquids in your cart. Using paper or compostable bags will also help keep the cart clean.
- If possible, keep the food waste cart in a shady area outside and out of direct sunlight.
- Additional information can be found here: <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/garbage-recycling/recycle-food.asp>

Suggestions on how to reduce yard waste:

Often materials in yard waste carts will settle when left for a few days, particularly in the summer. Keeping this in mind may help maximize the use of your service.

1. Some customers simply store branches and other yard debris and fill up carts during the next pickup when extra room may be available.
2. Backyard composting is becoming very popular and provides a free source of compost which provides natural fertilizer and helps retain soil moisture. The City of Kent offers a composter and rain barrel sale (limited quantities each spring). This year the sale will be Saturday, March 26 at 9:00 a.m. at Russell Road Park.
3. Mulching mowers are becoming more popular with many citizens. These types of mowers cut grass blades into tiny pieces. This material can be left on the lawn for a free natural fertilizer reducing the amount of yard waste materials for collection.
4. Spring and fall curbside events will continue which allows for up to 10 additional 32-gallon units per event at no additional charge.
5. Christmas tree collection will continue to be offered each January at no additional cost.
6. Fallen branches can be mulched and placed in the flower bed, assisting in weed control.
7. Visit King County's Solid Waste Division website to find locations that accept residential yard waste.
 - <http://your.kingcounty.gov/solidwaste/wdidw/>