

# Attention Restaurants and Meeting Facilities: Food is too valuable to waste.

Consider composting - here's how:

Your restaurant or meeting facility should consider diverting food waste if:



- It serves 1,500 or more meals per week AND
- The property has its own dumpster

Tip: A new State regulation expected in the summer of 2014 will ban disposal of organics by facilities that dispose of more than one ton of food waste per week.

## Why divert food waste?

- Food scraps typically represent 15-25% of a restaurant's solid waste
- Ensure compliance with the forthcoming food waste disposal ban
- Can reduce total waste costs by decreasing the solid waste portion
- Can lower water, sewer, electric expenses with less garbage disposal use
- Recycling activities typically improve (or begin!) with the implementation of a compost program



## Need more?

- Consumers and meeting planners striving to "go green" will be more attracted to the facility
- Employee pride, morale and retention improve in eco-friendly environments
- Landfill space is limited and organics generate a potent greenhouse gas while they decompose
- This material can be used to feed animals, improve soil conditions, generate renewable energy

## Concerned about odor and pests?

- Remember, it's the same waste you have today
- Good housekeeping practices will minimize these problems
  - Immediately clean up spills around the disposal area
  - Keep the lid on the dumpster locked or the tote closed at all times
  - Layer organics between waxed cardboard to minimize moisture
  - Rinse out tote or dumpster as necessary
- Deodorizers or a 50/50 solution of bleach and water spray can be used if necessary



## What material can be composted?



- Trimmings from food prep activities
- Un-served and un-eaten food, including meat, bones, dairy products
- Unused sauces and dressings
- Coffee grounds, filters and tea bags
- Bar fruit and snacks
- Flowers and other centerpiece greenery
- Wax-coated cardboard, wax paper
- Soiled paper placemats, doilies, napkins and towels

Note: Paper products cannot be included if scraps are being used for animal feed.

## Ready – Set – Compost!

- Classify waste streams to determine materials and volume of organic, recyclable, solid waste
  - Remember the goal to minimize solid waste to reduce costs
- Work with your hauler to determine needs (service, frequency, container size)
  - If a strong recycling program is not currently in place, now is the time
  - Make sure that your hauler adjusts your disposal service so that you can realize savings
- Consider the diversion options, based on availability, cost, material flexibility
  - Organics can be composted onsite, diverted to animal feed, or hauled to a processing facility
  - Composting onsite is beneficial if you have (or plan to have) a garden or landscaping needs
    - Saves money, but limits the material that can be diverted and takes maintenance
  - Partner with a local pig farmer that will use the material as animal feed
    - Can save money, but cannot include soiled paper and waxed cardboard
  - Contract with a hauler that will bring materials to a processing facility
    - Can divert more materials, easier to implement, but could be more expensive
- Evaluate disposal container options and pickup frequency if sending off-site
  - Two, three, or four yard lockable plastic dumpster or multiple 64-gallon totes
  - Biodegradable bags or none (cost versus convenience)
- Get service logistics in place



## How to separate food waste



- Make compost (and recycle) bins as convenient as trash cans for easy separation
- Use flat hotel pans, 1- and 5-gallon plastic pails to collect organics, as they are easy to manage, available, and can be put in the dishwasher
- Locate where food is prepped, plates are scraped, coffee is brewed, drinks mixed
- Cover and stack pails by the door to minimize trips to outdoor collection container

## Education is key

- Post laminated signs that list and portray what materials are compostable, recyclable or trash
- Provide training to all cooks, wait staff, function staff, and dishwashers
- Identify a champion for each shift to oversee separation activities and train new hires
- Emphasize need for good housekeeping practices and to keep containers closed to minimize risk of odors and pests

## After implementation

- Periodically check compost, recycle and trash bins to ensure material properly sorted
  - Remind staff and update signs as needed
- Ask staff for ideas to simplify diversion for ease and efficiencies
- Evaluate food scraps collected to identify opportunities to improve preparation efficiencies and decrease the amount of uneaten food
- Look for ways to further decrease the amount of solid waste generation
  - Eliminate single serve condiment packets, paper placemats, straws, coffee stirrers
- Meet with hauler to discuss ways to reduce contamination, divert more materials, reduce costs
  - Reduce size of solid waste dumpster or frequency of pickups if possible
- Share waste reduction accomplishments with staff and customers and celebrate!



## COMPOST PLANNING WORKSHEET

**OBSERVATIONS** What are the facility's waste streams, opportunities to divert materials from the trash? Tailor the list to your facility.

Compost	Recycle	Solid waste
All pre-, post- food scraps	Metal, glass, plastic containers	Styrofoam containers
Waxed corrugated cardboard*	Cardboard - corrugated, supply boxes	Saran wrap
Paper napkins, paper towels*	Paper	Foil, foil bags
Fiberboard bowls*		Gloves
Wax paper*		Condiment packets
		Straws
*Do not include if material is going to be used as animal feed		

**Organic Disposal Logistics** Consider generation and space requirements

Food waste average is 1 pound per plate served

64-gallon tote will hold approximately 300 pounds of food waste, less if paper products included

2-yard dumpster will hold approximately 1,200 pounds of food waste, less if paper products included

Waste Management Costs	Current Container	Monthly Cost	Container w Composting	Monthly Cost
Disposal Route	Size, Frequency of Disposal	Cost	Size, Frequency of Disposal	Cost
Solid Waste				
Recycle				
Compost		\$0		
<b>TOTAL</b>		\$0	<b>Change in monthly cost</b>	\$0

**Notes**

Plan