

## Why Recycle Food Scraps?

Food scraps are one of the largest components of trash sent to landfills and incinerators. However, food scraps are not trash, they are a resource that can be turned into useful compost.

Recycling food scraps into compost captures their nutrients and energy and returns them to the environment. When food scraps are sent to a landfill or incinerator this resource is lost. In addition, food scraps inside landfills create methane, a greenhouse gas with a stronger warming effect than carbon dioxide. When hauled to an incinerator (as we do in Connecticut), food scraps reduce the efficiency of the incinerator because they are wet and heavy and therefore do not burn well.

Composting is a far better way to manage food scraps! Instead of wasting energy burning food or creating methane from landfilling it, composting food scraps yields a useful and valuable product that gives back to our nutrient life cycle, resulting in cleaner soil, water and air.

## What Is Compost?

Compost is decomposed organic matter that has many beneficial uses, including improving soil health. When you purchase a bag of potting soil or observe your landscaper putting down "dirt," that is compost.

Compost benefits our landscape by maximizing plant growth, preventing soil erosion and mitigating the frequency of water, fertilizer and pesticide use.

By recycling your food scraps you are reducing waste and creating compost - a double win!

**THANK YOU for participating in Darien's  
Food Scrap Recycling Program!**

For updates, follow *Darien Recycling Center* on Facebook and  
*@DarienRecycles* on Twitter!

# Town of Darien

# Food Scrap Recycling Guide



**Darien Energy & Recycling  
Advisory Committee**

# Food Scrap Recycling: It's Easy!

## Here's How To Do It:

1. **COLLECT** food scraps in a kitchen collection container. Although not required, you may line it with a compostable or paper bag - *please no plastic bags*. Store container in a convenient location (on counter, under sink, in cabinet drawer, etc.).



2. Most residents will fill the kitchen collection container with food scraps 3-4 times per week. Therefore it is suggested that residents also have a larger bin to **TRANSFER** food scraps into for weekly storage. This larger bin can also be used to transport food scraps to the Recycling Center. Anything that holds approximately 5-6 gallons and has a lid will work. It is recommended that food storage bins be kept indoors – either in the house or in the garage.



3. **BRING** your transportation bin to the Food Scrap Recycling drop-off at the Recycling Center to dispose of food scraps as often as needed.

**All material collected is brought to a commercial composting facility where it is turned into compost.**

## Drop-off Location and Hours:

The Food Scrap Recycling drop-off bins are located at the Darien Recycling & Refuse Center (**126 Ledge Road**) and are accessible during Recycling Center hours of operation (**Monday-Saturday 7am-2:45 pm**). There is no charge to drop off food scraps, but you must have a current Recycling Center permit (sticker) to enter the facility.

## Accepted Items:

- ALL FOOD, including:
  - Fruits and Vegetables (remove stickers, bands, ties)
  - Meat and Poultry (bones ok)
  - Fish and Shellfish (shells ok)
  - Dairy Products
  - Bread and Pasta
  - Rice and Grains
  - Egg Shells
  - Chips and Snacks
  - Nuts and Seeds
  - Leftover, Spoiled and Expired Food (cooked ok)
- Coffee Grounds (paper filters ok)
- Tea Bags (no staples)
- Cut Flowers
- Compostable Bags (no plastic bags)

**A successful program depends on you!** Items not on the “accepted” list are contaminants and are never allowed in the bins. Examples:

- No plastic bags, plastic packaging or wrappers. Use only compostable bags, paper bags or no bags.
- No baby/hand/cleaning wipes.
- No pet waste.
- If unsure about an item, please email us before putting it in the bin: [recycle@darienct.gov](mailto:recycle@darienct.gov)

## Starter Kits and Compostable Bags:

Starter kits can be purchased through the Department of Public Works office (Town Hall, 2 Renshaw Road) for \$25 (**cash, or checks payable to Town of Darien**). Kits include one 2-gallon kitchen collection container, one 6-gallon storage & transportation bin, and one roll of compostable bags. Additional compostable bags are available for purchase (25 bags for \$2/roll). *If purchased elsewhere, bags must have an ASTM D6400 rating!*

**QUESTIONS? Email**  
**[recycle@darienct.gov](mailto:recycle@darienct.gov)**