

City of Vancouver Residential Food Scraps Collection Program

City of Vancouver homes that get yard trimmings collection service have a new, easy way to compost. Some of the food scraps that used to go in your garbage can now go in your yard trimmings cart.

Why is the City launching a food scraps collection program?

About 35 per cent of garbage from single-family homes is made up of compostable food scraps. Food scraps are a large source of greenhouse gases at the landfill. Collecting and composting food scraps will divert thousands of tonnes of organic material from the landfill, will produce a valuable resource (compost), and help Vancouver towards its goal of becoming the greenest city in the world by 2020

How do I get started?

Get a small container with a lid for your kitchen such as an ice cream bucket or large yogurt container. Make sure it's a size you can comfortably carry, and is easy to wash. Whenever you have any of the accepted food scraps, put them in the container. Empty your kitchen container in your yard trimmings cart regularly.

What kinds of food scraps can I put in the cart?

You may put uncooked fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and filters, teabags, and eggshells in with their yard trimmings. Only these food items will be collected for now. A second phase of food scraps collection will be introduced in 2011.

Why can I only put uncooked vegetables and fruit in the cart?

The oil and other ingredients in cooked produce make them more susceptible to odours, pests and insects. Because the first phase of the program stays with the bi-weekly yard trimmings collection schedule, it's best to only put uncooked fruit and vegetables in your cart.

What shouldn't I put in my yard trimmings cart?

Do not put:

- compostable/biodegradable plastic
- plastic bags, wrap or containers
- meat, fish, or bones
- dairy, pasta, rice or bread
- any oil or cooked food
- rocks, soil or sod
- animal excrement

Newspaper or brown bags are accepted if they are being used to wrap food scraps or as a liner for your kitchen container or cart.

Will my collection schedule change?

Your yard trimmings collection schedule will stay the same for this year.

What if I need a different size cart?

Call 311 to arrange for another cart.

How do I keep away odours, insects and pests from the food scraps?

For your kitchen container:

- sprinkle with baking soda
- line with newspaper or a paper bag or wrap food waste in newspaper or place in paper bag
- empty it out and wash it regularly
- keep the lid on when not in use

For your yard trimmings cart:

- line the bottom with newspaper
- layer food scraps under yard trimmings
- sprinkle with baking soda
- keep the cart in a shady area out of direct sunlight
- keep the cart lid closed at all times
- put your cart out every yard trimmings collection day, even if you only have a few scraps
- wash your yard trimmings cart periodically with a mild, non-toxic detergent
- pour dirty water onto grass or gravel, not down the storm drain

What should I do if I already have a backyard composter?

Keep using it. It's still the best way to compost since it saves on collection costs and energy use.

How can I take part if I live in an apartment or complex that doesn't have yard trimmings carts?

The City will not be able to provide food waste (with yard trimmings) collection service to businesses or multi-unit residences such as apartments and condominiums. For a list of private companies that can provide food waste collection services to these buildings, visit our website at vancouver.ca

Will this new program increase the utility fee on my property tax bill?

There will not be any increase on the 2010 property tax bill related to food waste.