

# HOW

# TO...

# START A VOLUNTARY COMPOSTING PROGRAM



## SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITY

Waste audits from campus buildings reveal that 30% of the trash Stanford sends to the landfill is actually organic material. In the landfill, anaerobic decay of food waste releases methane, which has 23 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. Composting greatly reduces these emissions. All of Stanford's dining halls and more than half of the cafes on campus have active composting programs. Interested buildings and departments can start a voluntary office composting program to further the university's composting efforts.

## HERE'S HOW:

### 1) Plan & Prepare

- Determine what type of compostables the program will collect: just coffee grounds, filters, and tea bags, all fruit and vegetables, all food, or all food and compostable containers. Stanford's compost program can accept all types of food and Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified compostable containers.
- Determine the location of the nearest food waste collection point by contacting PSSI/ Stanford Recycling Center (650-321-4236, [recycling@pssi.stanford.edu](mailto:recycling@pssi.stanford.edu)).
- Determine who will volunteer to monitor the compost collection, empty it on a regular schedule, and clean the bin consistently.
- Determine the location of the compost bin. A kitchen or break room location is recommended.

## COMPOSTABLES

kitchen and yard waste only



**All Food**



**NO Human or Animal Waste**



**Paper Plates & Napkins**

\* including pizza & donut boxes



**NO Bathroom or Facial Tissue**



**Compostable & Biodegradable Plastics**



**EXTRA CREDIT: Plants, Leaves & Wood**

**THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING!**  
For a complete guide to recycling, visit <http://recycling.stanford.edu>.

This bin and its contents are property of Overstock Sanitary Services, Inc./Stanford Recycling Center, 650.321.4236 recycling@pssi.stanford.edu



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CONTINUED

## 2) Act & Implement

- Please contact PSSI to order an authorized compost container to collect food scraps, compostable serviceware, and other compostable items.
- Replace all purchases of disposable service ware with compostable service ware. Purchase only BPI-certified products (plates, towels, cups, knives, forks, spoons). Replace plastic coffee stirrers with wood stirrers or reusable spoons. Compostable service ware and BPI-certified compostable bin liners can be purchased through [SmartMart](#). The shared favorites folder “Compostable Break Room Supplies” helps identify more than 40 suitable items.
- Affix the university’s compost collection label to the bin (visit [recycling.stanford.edu](#) to download labels). Empty the compost either daily or every other day to minimize odors and bugs. Keep the lid closed. Placing paper towels or newspapers at the bottom of the bin helps minimize liquid collection. Baking soda will help reduce odors.
- At this point, custodians are not responsible for emptying the compost bin unless specifically contracted to do so. Please communicate with your custodial staff to make sure everyone is aware of the program and their responsibilities.



PSSI can provide authorized compost collection bins. Photo Credit: PSSI

## 3) Publicize & Launch

- Spread the word about the new composting program. Schedule an educational staff meeting and/or send an email announcing the program and its parameters.
- Continue volunteer recruitment to help with the emptying schedule.
- Send congratulatory notices to building occupants detailing how much material has been composted.
- If contamination (non-compostable material) is discovered, be sure to reeducate building occupants.



Stanford’s food and compostable material goes to Newby Island Compost Facility where it becomes fertile soil and dirt! Photo Credit: PSSI

### MORE INFORMATION

#### SUSTAINABLE STANFORD’S WASTE REDUCTION EFFORTS

<http://sustainable.stanford.edu/waste>

#### CONTACTS

Peninsula Sanitary Service Inc: Julie Muir, Manager 650.321.4236, [juliem@pssi.stanford.edu](mailto:juliem@pssi.stanford.edu)

Sustainability Programs: Fahmida Ahmed, Associate Director, Office of Sustainability, SEM 650.721.1518, [fahmida@stanford.edu](mailto:fahmida@stanford.edu)

