

# HOW

# TO...

# START A CAFÉ 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 cafés on campus have active composting programs. Interested cafés can join this growing group with just a few easy steps.

## HERE'S HOW:

### 1) Plan and Prepare

- Try to optimize the amount of food being served so that less food waste is produced. Consider donating leftover food to [SPOON](#).
- Review Stanford's [compost guidelines](#) for a thorough understanding of what can and cannot be composted.
- Consider starting out with “behind the counter” composting, involving just café staff. Once the staff is comfortable with composting, branch out to include customers with “front of the counter” composting options.
- There is zero tolerance for contamination in the food waste. Therefore, cafés must replace all disposable serveware with compostable substitutes. Stanford's compost program can accept all types of food and [Biodegradable Products Institute \(BPI\) certified](#) compostable products, which can be purchased through [SmartMart](#).
- Keep the bins clean and use BPI certified compostable bags as liners to collect compostables rather than plastic garbage bags. Regular plastic bags are not allowed in the food waste collection bins.
- Contact [PSSI/Stanford Recycling Center](#) (650-321-4236 or [recycling@pssi.stanford.edu](mailto:recycling@pssi.stanford.edu)) to let them know of your interest in starting a café composting program and find out where the nearest compost bins are located.
- Provide training for café staff and volunteers through [PSSI/Stanford Recycling Center](#).

## COMPOSTABLES

kitchen and yard waste only



**All Food**



**Paper Plates & Napkins**

\* including pizza & donut boxes



**Compostable & Biodegradable Plastics**



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



**NO Human or Animal Waste**



**NO Bathroom or Facial Tissue**

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

This bin and its contents are property of  
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650.321.4236 recycling@pssi.stanford.edu



# HOW TO...

# START A CAFÉ COMPOSTING PROGRAM *CONTINUED*

## 2) Implement “Behind the Counter” Collection

- Select and order a bin to collect compostable materials. PSSI/Stanford Recycling Center can provide suggestions regarding bin selection and sizing. Once you have a bin, add a label!
- Source separate compostable items from trash during food preparation and other behind-the-counter activities.
- Empty café compost bins into centralized collection bins. Locations are provided by PSSI/Stanford Recycling Center.

## 3) Expand Program for “Front-of-Counter” Collection

- Offer only (BPI) certified compostable containers and serviceware, which can be purchased through SmartMart.
- Replace all single-use and/or disposal items (such as napkins, condiment containers, and take-out boxes) with a reusable, recyclable, or compostable substitute.
- Provide equal numbers of compost and garbage bins and place them next to each other at all locations.



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

## 4) Publicize, Educate, and Track

- Develop announcements, signage, and other materials to educate staff, volunteers, and customers on food waste and recycling programs.
- Assign staff or volunteers to monitor bins, which helps prevent contamination. Provide training and retraining as necessary.
- Suggest that cashiers remind customers about the compost program to increase awareness.

### MORE INFORMATION

PSSI/STANFORD RECYCLING CENTER  
[http://bgm.stanford.edu/pssi\\_food\\_composting\\_requirements](http://bgm.stanford.edu/pssi_food_composting_requirements)  
CONTACT

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