



Organics Collection

Frequently Asked Questions



Where can I buy certified compostable bags?

You can find certified compostable bags at grocery and home improvement stores in your area. You can also buy bags through major online retailers. Check out www.nyc.gov/organics for a list of stores carrying these bags. Can't find them in your neighborhood? Ask your local store to start carrying them, or call 311 to suggest a store that should carry compostable liners.

Do I have to buy special bags?

If you choose to line your bin, there are many options that do not require a special product. Collect scraps in newspaper and discard together in the brown bin, or use a regular plastic bag to empty scraps into the brown bin, then throw away the bag. Find more tips at www.nyc.gov/organics.

How do I keep my bins clean and fresh?

Inside your home, empty and wash the kitchen collector regularly (remember: it's dishwasher safe!). Lining the collector with compostable bags or other material will make cleaning up easier. Some participants also store food scraps in bags or containers inside the freezer until collection day.

Outside, make sure you keep the brown bin latched and in a shaded area, especially during warm weather. Alternate layers of food scraps with yard trimmings or newspaper to absorb moisture and odors. Find more tips for maintaining your bins at www.nyc.gov/organics.

Will the food waste attract rats and raccoons?

Food scraps are typically mixed with garbage and left on the curb in black bags accessible by rodents, raccoons, and bugs. The brown bins are specially designed with latches and other features that keep pests out.

My organic waste was not collected.

Report missed collections by calling 311 or online at www.nyc.gov/311.

There is a problem with my bin.

Report broken or stolen bins to 311.

What items can I put in the brown organics bin?

All food items are accepted in the Organics Collection pilot, including meat, dairy, and leftovers. **Food-soiled paper** like tea bags, coffee filters, napkins, and paper plates are accepted. **Leaves and yard waste** can also go in the brown bin.



I have a lot of yard waste but my bin is full. What should I do?

Leave the leaves to us! If your brown bin is full, put fall leaves and any extra yard waste in paper lawn & leaf bags or unlined rigid containers with the lid off, and set these out for collection next to the brown bin. Landscapers cannot set out your yard waste for Sanitation collection; they are required to dispose of it separately.

Are meat and bones ok? I can't compost them in my backyard.

Yes! Meat, bones, and dairy are all accepted during the pilot. The conditions at NYC's industrial composting facilities allows for the breakdown of these materials, as well as paper and certified compostable plastic liners, which small-scale and backyard systems cannot typically process.

What happens to the organic waste after Sanitation collects it?

Most of the organic waste collected from residents through this pilot is taken to local and regional composting facilities, where it is composted on a large scale. Finished compost is used in NYC parks and gardens. A portion of the organic waste collected is converted to renewable energy.

When will organics collection come to other parts of the city?

Sanitation expects to continue expanding to other neighborhoods in early 2014.

During the pilot program, Sanitation will assess the program's cost effectiveness and its success in diverting waste from landfills to determine if this service will continue on a permanent basis.

Where can I find more info about organics in NYC?

Visit www.nyc.gov/organics or call 311 for more information.



Organics Collection

In the fall of 2012, the Department of Sanitation (DSNY) began offering curbside collection of organic waste – including food scraps, food-soiled paper, and yard waste – to select NYC schools, residences, and institutions. This service, called for in Local Law 77 of 2013, is a pilot program to divert organic material from landfills for beneficial use.

The following are answers to some frequently asked questions regarding the enrollment of residential and institutional buildings that are not automatically included in the geographic pilot areas.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I enroll my building in the new NYC Organics Collection program?

If your building has 10 or more residential units, you can fill out the inquiry form at www.nyc.gov/organics (look for link on right side) to begin the enrollment process. Buildings with 1-9 units are only eligible for the small residential pilot program. If you would like to nominate your neighborhood for consideration in future expansion decisions, please contact DSNY using the “contact us” link at www.nyc.gov/organics.



How can I expedite the enrollment process for my building?

The Organics Collection program is voluntary. Enrollment can be made easier and faster with proactive resident and building management support. Following submission of the inquiry form, build support for the program among the building’s residents and management. Interested residents should notify their building management as soon as possible and supply them with relevant information.

Would my building have any financial responsibility?

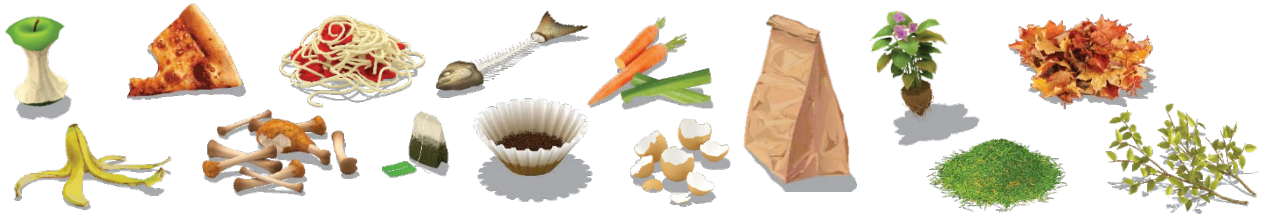
Buildings are required to supply any supplies associated with the program. Buildings will most likely have to purchase containers and supply any labor associated with setting out the containers. DSNY will assist the building with planning the building’s program and will supply relevant education materials.

What is involved in the enrollment process?

Following the submission of an inquiry form, DSNY will contact the building's management to confirm interest, and organize a site visit. During the site visit, DSNY will assist the building to develop an implementation and education plan, and to answer any questions or concerns. Following the submission of the building plan to DSNY, the building will need to implement education and training to residents and staff. At the building's request, DSNY will attend resident information or education events. DSNY will conduct a final site visit to confirm the building is ready for collection to begin.

What items can I put in the brown organics bin?

All food items are accepted in the Organics Collection pilot, including meat, dairy, and leftovers. **Food-soiled paper** like tea bags, coffee filters, napkins, and paper plates are accepted. **Leaves and yard waste** can also go in the organics collection bin (no landscaper waste!).



Are meat and bones ok?

Yes! Meat, bones, and dairy are all accepted during the pilot. The conditions at NYC's industrial composting facilities allows for the breakdown of these materials, as well as paper and certified compostable plastic liners, which small-scale and backyard systems cannot typically process.

What happens to the organic waste after Sanitation collects it?

Most of the organic waste collected from residents through this pilot is taken to local and regional composting facilities, where it is composted on a large scale. Finished compost is used in parks and gardens. A portion of the organic waste collected is converted to renewable energy.

NOTE: Other questions such as frequency of collection, space needed for bins, specific costs associated with the program (if any), and other building-specific questions will be answered by DSNY staff during the initial site visit.