

Frequently Asked Questions Food and Yard Waste Collection



Food and yard waste collection is expanding in the Comox Strathcona Waste Management Service Area.

Curbside food/yard waste collection is here! Comox Strathcona Waste Management (CSWM), in partnership with the City of Campbell River, City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland, are committed to sustainably managing organics (food/yard waste) through their respective curbside collection programs. Starting in January 2023, the City of Courtenay will be joining the Town of Comox and Village of Cumberland with weekly co-mingled food and yard waste curbside collection. The City of Campbell River will be starting this program in Spring 2023.

Read the frequently asked questions below to learn more about how you can help divert organic waste from the landfill or visit www.cswm.ca/compost for more information.



About Organics Diversion

What's happening in each municipality?

Residents in Comox and Cumberland that are part of municipal curbside collection have been diverting food waste from their garbage through the weekly pilot organics collection program since 2013. Residents who are not yet participating are welcome to start leaving their kitchen waste out for collection comingled with their yard waste on designated collection days.

Residents of Courtenay and Campbell River that are part of municipal curbside collection are invited to participate in the new service and start setting out their comingled food and yard waste for curbside collection beginning January 2023 (Courtenay), and Spring 2023 (Campbell River). Watch for information from your municipality about when collection begins in your area.

Why are we diverting organics?

Food waste currently accounts for about 30 per cent of the total garbage sent to the CSWM regional landfill. But food waste isn't garbage – and sending it to the landfill means it takes up valuable airspace while creating harmful greenhouse gases. By diverting organics and transforming it into nutrient rich compost, we can extend the lifespan of the landfill as well as create high quality compost for the community.

Organics composting is essential for the CSWM service to manage solid waste cost effectively and to achieve the CSWM's Solid Waste Management Plan waste diversion goals, and align with the Province's disposal target of 350 kg/person/year.



For more information visit: www.cswm.ca/compost

What happens if we don't divert food waste?

There is limited space at our landfill, and once it is full, there will be a significant increase in costs to manage our waste. Extending the life of our landfill for as long as possible by reducing what goes in the landfill will reduce costs for our community in the long-term.

Reliable organics processing is essential for the CSWM service to manage solid waste cost effectively and to achieve the CSWM's Solid Waste Management Plan waste diversion rate of over 70%, which will be achieved primarily through the increased diversion of organic waste, with a focus on diversion of food waste.

Using the Service

How often will comingled food and yard waste be collected? How can I keep track of schedules and what goes where?



Curbside collection for food and yard waste is managed by each local municipality. Please refer to your local municipality for your curbside collection schedules. Each of the four municipalities have the following information and resources available:

- **Courtenay** - The curbside collection schedule for food and yard waste can be accessed via the Courtenay Collects app, printed schedule and/or the City of Courtenay website.
- **Comox** - An app is coming soon! Watch for updates at Town of Comox website and save your printed schedule.
- **Cumberland** - An app is coming soon! Watch for updates at Village of Cumberland website and save your printed schedule.
- **Campbell River** - The curbside collection schedule for food and yard waste can be accessed via the Campbell River Recycles app and the City of Campbell River website.

What bins do I use for food/yard waste collection?

Residents can use their existing lidded bins or containers of their choosing, clearly labeled as Organic Waste, to set out their comingled food/yard waste at the curb. Please refer to your local municipality for curbside set-out instructions and volume/weight limits.

As part of the service, all residents within the program area will receive kitchen bins – small pails that can be used to collect food waste inside the house before transferring to their larger food and yard waste lidded containers to be set out at the curb.



Watch for new decals for your curbside lidded bins/containers, to be delivered along with the kitchen bins in early 2023.



How can I minimize interactions with pests and other wildlife?

- ✓ Place your bins at the curb on your designated collection day only (not the night before).
- ✓ Bring in your organics bin as soon as possible after collection.
- ✓ Reduce odour by cleaning the kitchen and curbside bins with hot water and phosphate-free, environmentally friendly detergent, and/or sprinkle with baking soda.
- ✓ If possible, freeze compost in between collection days and place the frozen compost in the bin for collection to further minimize odours and attractants.

Are there limits on how much we can set out at the curb for collection?

Curbside collection for food and yard waste is managed by each local municipality. Please refer to your local municipality for curbside set-out instructions.



Courtenay – www.courtenay.ca/wastecollection

Comox – www.comox.ca/garbageandwaste/garbage

Cumberland – www.cumberland.ca/solid-waste

Campbell River – www.campbellriver.ca/city-services/garbage-recycling-yard-waste/overview

Using your Food and Yard Waste Bin

What is accepted for collection?



Table scraps, food scrapings, and food soiled papers – including breads, pasta, rice and noodles, coffee grounds and paper filters, dairy products and non-dairy alternatives, eggshells, fruits and veggies, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish and bones, paper towels, napkins and plates, pizza delivery boxes, tea bags.



Yard waste – flowers, garden trimmings and leaves, plants (living or dead/dried). Branches must be no more than 7.5 cm (3 in) in diameter and cut to fit in the bin with the lid closed.

What isn't accepted for collection?

No compostable/biodegradable plastic - Plastic bags, containers or cutlery – even those labelled as biodegradable, compostable, oxy-degradable or degradable plastic bags and containers - are not accepted. They do not break down sufficiently and will contaminate the finished compost.

No metal, glass, pet litter, diapers or plastic - These items can either be recycled curbside or at your local depot (metal, glass, plastic), or need to go in the garbage.

No stickers - Remove any stickers from produce before discarding peels for composting.

No fats, oils or greases - Residential used cooking oil in sealed containers can be brought to the Comox Valley and Campbell River Waste Management Centres on Household Hazardous Waste drop-off days. For more information visit www.cswm.ca/hhw.

Why can't I use plastic, "biodegradable", "oxy-degradable", "degradable" or "compostable" bags?



The compost system used at the composting facility will not fully break down the components of these bags and the residue will contaminate the finished compost product.

Should I use a liner for my collection bin?

Compostable and biodegradable plastic liners are NOT accepted. Acceptable liners for your kitchen bin include shredded paper, paper bags (without plastic liner), and newspaper. Liners are not required.



Why are some paper and cotton-based products not accepted?

Paper products containing metal, foil or plastic coating/lamination will not break down in the composting process and will end by contaminating the finished compost. Examples of these products include: Tetra Pak juice boxes, diapers, baby wipes, personal hygiene products, makeup removal pads. Paper towels or tissues with household cleaning liquids (i.e. solvents and cleaners) can kill the necessary bacteria essential for breaking down organic matter and therefore, should not be placed in the organics bin.



What should I use to collect my food waste inside?

Use your CSWM supplied kitchen bin, or a container of your choice. Transfer to the lidded collection bin as needed, until collection day.

More Service Details

How will organic waste be collected and processed?

A new regional composting facility in Campbell River will be fully operational in 2023. This facility will enable organics collection from 30,000 single family homes in Campbell River, Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland.

An organic transfer station has been constructed at the Comox Valley Waste Management Centre in Cumberland to divert organic waste to the new Campbell River facility. Trailers will transport organics from Courtenay, Comox and Cumberland to the regional compost facility in Campbell River on their return trip, maximizing trucking efficiencies.

Who is part of this food and yard waste program?

Residents currently receiving a municipal curbside collection service will be part of the food and yard waste program. For specific curbside collection program eligibility, please refer to your local municipal solid waste bylaw to determine eligibility for participation.

What happens to the compost that's created?

The finished compost will be used for agriculture and landscaping.



What if I already compost at home?

That's great, we encourage all composting! The curbside food and yard waste collection service can enhance existing efforts by accepting items not suitable for backyard systems – this includes meat and bones, fish and dairy. Please refer to your local municipality for applicable bylaws pertaining to outdoor composting.



For more information visit: www.cswm.ca/compost