

# Vermont's Residential Food Waste Ban



## Vermont's Universal Recycling Law



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# Universal Recycling Law TIMELINE

**JULY 1  
2014**

- › Transfer stations must accept recyclables
- › Food scrap generators of 104 tons/year (2 tons/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

**JULY 1  
2015**

- › Statewide unit based pricing takes effect, requiring residential trash charges be based on volume or weight
- › Recyclables are banned from the landfill
- › Transfer stations/Bag-drop Haulers must accept leaf and yard debris seasonally (April 1 - December 15)
- › Haulers must offer residential recycling collection at no separate charge
- › Public buildings must provide recycling containers alongside all trash containers in public spaces (exception for restrooms)
- › Food scrap generators of 52 tons/year (1 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

**JULY 1  
2016**

- › Leaf, yard, and clean wood debris are banned from the landfill
- › Food scrap generators of 26 tons/year (1/2 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

**JULY 1  
2017**

- › Transfer stations/Bag-drop Haulers must accept food scraps
- › Food scrap generators of 18 tons/year (1/3 ton/week) must divert material to any certified facility within 20 miles

**JULY 1  
2020**

- › Food scraps are banned from the landfill
- › Haulers must offer food scrap collection to nonresidential customers and apartment buildings with four or more residential units unless another hauler will provide that service

# Vermont's Universal Recycling Law

Pay as You Throw Required: 2015

Requirements to keep food scraps out of the landfill: 2014-2020

Landfill Ban: 2020

Transfer Station Collection Requirement: 2017

Curbside Collection Requirement: 2020

# Implementation

# Behavior

- Getting the word out
- Influencing
- Coaching



# Systems and Infrastructure

- Composting capacity
  - Infrastructure
  - Knowledge



# Media Campaigns



Paid Campaigns



Earned Media



Social Media

LET'S  
**SCRAP**  
FOOD  
WASTE

**2020**







## Eat What You Buy. Compost the Scraps.

[Home](#) [About](#) [Tips](#) [Scrapbook](#)



Let's Scrap Food Waste



Watch later



Share





## Eat What You Buy. Compost the Scraps.

- [Home](#)
- [About](#)
- [Tips](#)
- [Clean Compost](#)
- [Scrap Food Waste Challenge](#)
- [Scrapbook](#)

# SCRAPBOOK

Real-Life Examples of the Various Ways Vermonters Manage Food Scraps

## Businesses

- [Self-hauling to a Compost Facility - Willow's Bagels](#) 
- [Consolidate and Self-Haul to a Transfer Station - Mountainside Resort](#) 
- [Curbside Pickup \(of Buckets\) for the Office - Stone Environmental](#) 
- [Waste Less Food and Dumpster Pick-up for the Scraps - Brattleboro Food Co-op](#) 
- [Hauler Pick-Up - Lake Morey Resort](#) 

**VTrecycles.com**  **VTrecycles**

 **TheVermontDEC**



**Find a Food Scrap  
Hauler**

**Benefits of  
Keeping Food Waste out of the Landfill**



**1**

VERMONT  
AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**Feeds People**

Rescued food donations  
**almost tripled**  
from 2014 to 2017 at the  
Vermont Foodbank.



**2**

**Reduces  
Greenhouse Gas  
Emissions**



**3**

Supports  
**Green Jobs**



**4**

Compost  
**Restores Soil**



**5**

**Reduces  
need for  
Landfills**

**Do you compost in  
your back yard?**



**You can throw meat  
and bones in the trash**



**Food Scraps are:**



**Parts of food not typically eaten**  
(peels, rinds, cores, shells, pits,  
seeds, bones, etc.)



**Food no longer good for eating**  
(like plate scrapings or leftovers  
gone bad)



**Coffee grounds and filters, tea  
and paper tea bags**




**Meat and bones UNLESS  
back-yard composting**

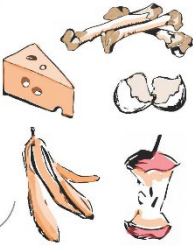
Food scrap drop-offs and pick-ups accept meat and  
bones; home composters can throw them in the trash

# Stickers, Bin Signs, FAQs, and more


## Food Scraps




**All Food Scraps**  
Fruits, vegetables, dairy, bread, grains, meat & bones, oils, sauces, eggs




**Remove stickers from produce!**



**Coffee Grounds & Filters**



www.VTrecycles.com




June 2022 Vermont Universal Recycling Law

### For Residents & Small Businesses Managing Food Scraps FAQ

Vermont state law prohibits food scraps from being put in the trash (with a few exceptions\*). Residents and small businesses have three options for managing their food scraps:

- 1) Hire a hauler to pick up food scraps. Many hauling companies collect food scraps, so ask your trash and recycling hauler if they offer this service. Or, find a food scrap hauler at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com). Haulers usually provide small buckets or rolling carts to pick up food scraps. Fees vary.
- 2) Drop off food scraps at a transfer station, fast trash/bag drop, or compost site. Contact your local waste management entity at [802recycles.com](http://802recycles.com) to learn more about drop-offs in your area. Fees vary.
- 3) Compost on-site. If your home or office has the space and someone is willing to actively manage the bin(s), on-site composting can be an easy option. [Plastic tumblers or open-bottomed compost bins](http://Plastic tumblers or open-bottomed compost bins) set on top of wire-mesh hardware cloth will deter most pests (learn more about composting in bear country in ["The Dirt on Compost"](http://The Dirt on Compost)). \*State law allows residents who compost in their yard to dispose of meat and bones in the trash, so animals aren't attracted to the compost bin.

#### What are food scraps?

Food scraps are 1) parts of food that are typically discarded rather than eaten: peels, rinds, cores, eggshells, seeds, pits, bones, shells, coffee grounds and filters, loose-leaf tea, and fats/oils/grease, and 2) food that was not finished: "plate scraps" or leftovers that went bad. Any type of food can become food scraps—bread, pasta, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauces, meat, fish, dairy, sweets, etc.

#### What should I do with meat and bones?

\*If you compost in your yard, you can put your meat and bones in the trash (the law allows this) or bring them to a food scrap drop-off, so they don't attract animals to your composting bin. If you get your food scraps picked up or bring them to a drop-off, collect your meat and bones with the rest of your food scraps.

#### Why did the state ban food scraps from landfills?

Food waste makes up about 20% of Vermont's trash at homes and businesses. Keeping food scraps out of the trash reduces greenhouse gas emissions and saves landfill space. Much wasted food is perfectly good (or would be good if eaten in time) and can be fed to people instead of going in the trash. Food scraps can also feed animals, create renewable energy, or produce compost, which restores soils.

#### Is anyone going to enforce the landfill bans?

The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) has enforcement authority. ANR's outreach and compliance efforts

## FOOD SCRAPS

For more information, contact the property manager or landlord.

**1 CLEAN CONTAINER WITH LID**



**NO**



**2 ALL FOOD, INCLUDING MEAT AND BONES**




**3 EMPTY CONTAINER INTO FOOD SCRAP TOTE REGULARLY**



**4 RINSE CONTAINER**



VERMONT

Get more tips at [VTrecycles.com](http://VTrecycles.com). Much thanks to the Champlain Housing Trust for sharing this poster. January 2020

# 2021

USE YOUR  
**LEFTOVERS.**  
SCRAP FOOD WASTE.



SHOP  
**SMART.**  
SCRAP FOOD WASTE.



LOVE  
**LEFTOVERS.**  
SCRAP FOOD WASTE!



SAVE  
**SIMPLY.**  
SCRAP FOOD WASTE.

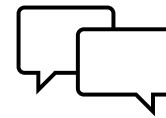




**2022**

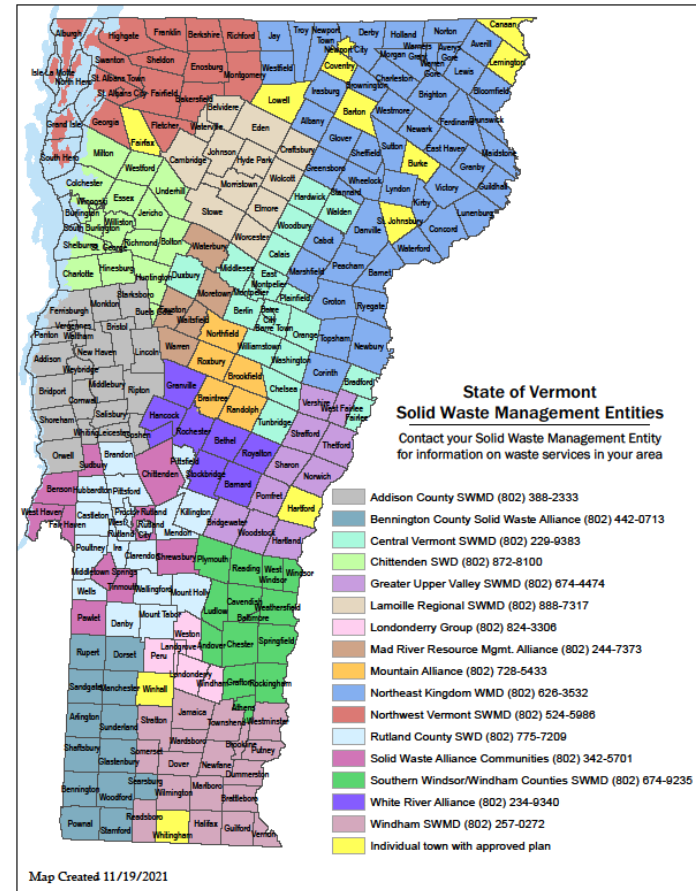


# Coaching, Mentoring, Problem-Solving



# Solid Waste Management Entities

- Information
- Outreach
- Assistance
- Sell discounted composting bins
- Backyard composting workshops
- Grants
- Facilities





# Master Composter Course

- 19 Years, >1,000 VT Student
- In 2021:
  - 95 volunteers
  - 26 reported
    - ~400 hours of service
    - reached >2,000 people



# Composting Association of Vermont (CAV)

[www.compostingvermont.org](http://www.compostingvermont.org)

- Vermont Organics Recycling Summit
- Community Composting
- On-Farm Food Scrap Composting
- Organics Diversion from Mixed-Use Buildings
- And much more



# **Increasing Composting Capacity**

# Compost Operator Training

## 10 courses since 2011



# Compost Technical Assistance ~45 facilities since 2012



# Grants: > \$1.5 million Awarded

2019

5 Projects



2021

11 Projects



2023

2 Projects



# Responding to Challenges

# Bird seed, trash, food scraps, and bears, oh my!





# Bear-resistant storage and composting containers



# Signs of Success



Many hundreds of compost bins sold



Thousands of Master Composter and backyard composting workshop participants



> 100 food scrap drop-offs



3x as many food scrap haulers





## Data:

Regulated  
Compost  
Facilities



Regulated  
Drop-offs



Estimate:  
Backyard  
Compost



## Data:

Regulated  
Compost  
Facilities



Regulated  
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Estimate:  
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Compost



## Not Measured:



On-farm  
Composting

Animal  
Feeding



Other  
Compost  
Sites



Some Anaerobic  
Digestion



# 2023 Waste Composition Study: Stay Tuned!

