

OUR SOLUTION FOR FOOD WASTE

WHAT WE LEARNED FROM OUR FOOD WASTE STUDY

Our recommendations are the result of a detailed study of all reasonable methods for managing food waste, and a public involvement process that gave residents the opportunity to provide feedback.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We will work to develop the following programs this year:

1. FOCUS ON WASTE REDUCTION

The most cost-effective option is not wasting food in the first place. We want to provide you with tools you can use to help reduce wasteful consumption of all materials, including food waste.

2. OFFER VOLUNTARY FOOD WASTE COLLECTION FROM BUSINESSES

Restaurants and grocery stores that want to reduce the amount of garbage they produce will be able to have food scraps collected and composted.

The type of food scraps collected will be only those that are compatible with our current composting processes (i.e. bread, vegetable trimmings, coffee grounds).

3. TARGET OTHER MATERIALS FOR LANDFILL DIVERSION

Since food waste breaks down quickly it doesn't actually take up much space in the landfill. We want to reduce the amount of materials going to the landfill that don't break down quickly and do take up valuable landfill space, such as wood and metal.



SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

We have a shared responsibility to address issues of waste. Our department can't control whether you put something in a garbage can or a recycling cart but we can provide you with the tools you need to make informed decisions.

RESIDENTIAL COLLECTION AND COMPOSTING DOESN'T ADDRESS THE PROBLEM OF WASTED FOOD

Problems of overproduction, hunger and waste cannot be solved by composting. Waste reduction, however, can make a big impact, and for that reason it is our highest priority. This recommendation reflects feedback from residents as the best option for managing food waste.



COMPOST QUALITY IS VERY IMPORTANT

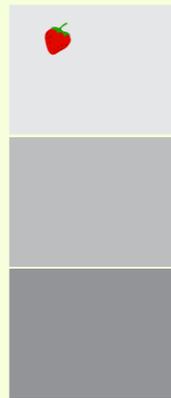
The compost made from yard waste collected and composted in Pierce County is high quality and in demand. Adding food waste to compost would reduce the quality while adding to the cost of operating compost facilities.

There are other costs that can't be easily measured in dollars and cents. For example, composting facilities around the country have experienced unpleasant odors and longer processing times after they've added food waste to their compost. And the compost they produce often can't be sold.



FOOD TAKES UP LITTLE LANDFILL SPACE

Since food is 28 percent of our waste stream, it's easy to assume that diverting it from the landfill to a composting facility will save landfill space for the future. Our study found that just isn't true. Food breaks down quickly in the landfill so any space it takes up is quickly recovered.



CURBSIDE REMINDER

A residential collection program is **not** part of our recommendation for food waste management.

The only items accepted in your curbside yard waste container are

Please remember:
Food waste and pizza boxes are **NOT** accepted.



Brush, branches, and roots (smaller than 4 inches in diameter)

- Leaves
- Grass clippings
- Weeds
- Flowers
- Plants
- Shrubs

piercecountywa.org/yardwaste

