

Presentation to Go Green Illinois: Collecting Organics and Potential Legislation in 2025

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Presentation Topics

1. Overview of residential, commercial and institutional food scrap collection programs
2. Keys to program development and expansion, and benefits of increased compost collection
3. Potential organics legislation in 2025



Food Scrap Collection Options

Back Yard

- SWALCO offers Backyard Compost Bins and Accessories at Reduced Rates.
- Hold annual Rain Barrel and Compost Bin sales. Sell approximately 250 to 300 compost bins per year at the events.



SOLID WASTE AGENCY OF LAKE COUNTY, IL



Lake County Forest Preserves
www.LCFPD.org

Rain Barrel, Compost Bin & Native Plant Sale

Rain Barrel & Compost Bin Sale:
Saturday, May 12, 2018, 9 am to 3 pm (One Day Only)

Native Plant Sale:
Saturday, May 12, 9 am to 3 pm and Sunday, May 13, 10 am to 2 pm

Independence Grove Forest Preserve
North Bay Pavilion
16400 W. Buckley Rd. (Rt. 137) Libertyville, IL
Located just east of Milwaukee Avenue (Rt. 21)



\$50
made from 100% recycled plastics

\$60
made from 50% recycled plastics



Choose from more than 60 varieties of native flowers and grasses.

For more information on this event, contact
SWALCO: swalco.org or call (847) 336-9340
FOREST PRESERVES: lcpd.org/plantsale or call (847) 367-6640

Food Scrap Collection Options

Drop-Offs

- Starting May 1st, 2016 the Village of Grayslake's Public Drop Off Recycling Center began accepting food scraps, the first such year-round drop off in the State. This is a **FREE** service to residents of Lake County.
- A second free drop off for food scraps is provided by LRS at its facility in Wauconda.
- P.A. 99-0011, effective in 2015, allows temporary and permanent drop offs for food scrap without an IEPA permit as long as statutory requirements are met.



Food Scrap Collection Options

Landscape Waste/Food Scrap “Ride Along” (8 Month Subscription or sticker)

Residents with this program may mix food scraps with landscape waste by placing food scraps along with the landscape waste and “ride along” thereby reducing costs to participate in food scrap diversion and introducing residents to food scrap diversion with the long-term goal of having year-round programs.



Food Scrap Collection Options

Landscape Waste Ride Along/ Year-Round Programs



Residential Food Scrap Composting Program

WHY COMPOST FOOD SCRAPS?

There are many reasons to recycle food scraps, including:

1. **It's easy!** Collect food scraps into a container and set out as part of your community's yard waste collection program.
2. **Reduces garbage and preserves landfill space**
3. **Reduces greenhouse gas production at landfills.**
4. **Creates compost.** Food scraps help to create a nutrient rich soil amendment that improves soil health and function. Compost rebuilds soils, protects topsoil from erosion, conserves water and attracts earthworms and other helpful organisms.

HOW TO COMPOST FOOD SCRAPS & TIPS TO REDUCE ODORS & PESTS

1. **Collect scraps** in your kitchen collector. Do not use plastic or biodegradable bags to line your collector.
2. **Empty food scraps** into your rigid yard waste container.
3. **Set Out** your rigid container (no Kraft bags) at the curb on regular yard waste collection day.

Tips to Reduce Odors and Pests: You may want to line container with newspapers or paper towels/bags, empty frequently, rinse after use (with vinegar or dish soap so-lution), sprinkle with baking soda, keep container closed

WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED?



- **Fruits and Vegetables**
(includes unpainted holiday pumpkins)



- **Leftovers/kitchen scraps** (includes coffee grounds, tea bags & filters)



- **Breads, grains, pasta and cereal**



- **Meat, poultry, seafood (including shells and bones)**

- **Dairy and Eggs (including shells; no liquids)**



- **Paper Products (includes paper towels, plates, napkins, egg cartons and pizza boxes)**



DO NOT INCLUDE: Plastic, Styrofoam, glass, diapers, metal, liquids, grease, pet waste, or oil.

For more information on backyard composting, how to and sales, visit swalco.org. October 2017



SWALCO Communities

- Bannockburn
- Deer Park
- Deerfield (year-round)
- Fox Lake
- Grayslake (winter opt-in)
- Gurnee
- Hawthorn Woods
- Highland Park (year-round)
- City of Highwood (year-round)
- Island Lake
- Kildeer
- Lake Barrington
- Lake Bluff (year-round)
- Lincolnshire
- Mundelein
- North Barrington (winter opt-in)
- Port Barrington (year-round)
- Riverwoods
- Round Lake
- Round Lake Beach
- Tower Lakes (winter opt-in)
- Volo
- Long Grove
- Third Lake
- Vernon Hills
- Wauconda
- Waukegan

Food Scrap Collection Options

Year-round organics collection as part of base service

In 2017, residents in Highwood and Lake Bluff became the first in the State to have community wide year-round organics collection. Since that time Deerfield, Port Barrington and Highland Park have implemented year-round programs.

This is not an opt in program, all residents are charged for the service (ride along is typically added at no extra charge for the basic yard waste service).

Challenge now is to expand programs, participation is still relatively low, at most 15% in year-round programs. This applies to ride-along as well, very difficult to measure participation rates.



Food Scrap Collection Options

School Programs

- SWALCO assists schools with numerous sustainability and environmental initiatives including Earth Flag, Earth Flag Everyday, recycling, reuse, conservation efforts and more.
- SWALCO, working with Seven Generations Ahead in 2019 and 2020, began to work with local schools to launch food scrap composting at a small number of schools in Lake County. Recently added schools in Grayslake.





Food Scrap Program Expansion



- Midwest Organics Recycling made a significant investment in expanding its site in 2017, the largest in Lake County.
- In 2018, Lake County Jail implements food scrap/recycling program, cut waste by over 50% and reduced costs.
- The ten commercial franchises in Lake County all have food scrap pricing in the contracts. SWALCO hired Bright Beat to initiate food scrap programs for restaurants in Highland Park, Grayslake, and Libertyville.



Key Factors to Expanding Programs

- Education, Education, Education.... this will be a long-term effort to change behavior.
- Need infrastructure expansion to reduce costs (both landscape waste transfer stations and compost sites).
- Local government must work to develop markets for compost through local use, market growth will prompt compost sites to invest and help grow organics diversion programs.
- Ride along can be done at no cost, depending on negotiations, the goal is for ride along programs to become year-round.
- It takes one or two towns to begin a bigger movement.
- Hauler's willingness to work with you is key.
- Route density and reduced costs can be achieved when businesses, institutions and schools within a town begin food scrap diversion programs.

2019 Lake County SWM Plan

Update – Benefits of Composting

- Based on 2018 diversion data, Lake County's current programs are reducing GHG by over 600,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.
- The consultant, RRS, modeled an alternative system that assumed a goal of 1% source reduction of food scraps (10,069 tons per year) and an additional 3% in recycling growth (38,679 additional tons per year) for aluminum cans, metal cans and cardboard. If achieved, it would increase GHG emission reductions by an additional 123,364 metric tons.
- The consultant concluded that "One of the greatest opportunities for GHG savings is alternative strategies for food scraps."



Potential Legislation in 2025

- Why: Despite the efforts of the IL Food Scrap & Composting Coalition and others food scrap collection is not as prevalent as needed, voluntary approach can only go so far.
- Senator Adriane Johnson filed SB 2816 this session, would ban organics from the landfill. The bill did not move. SWALCO and others met with the Senator and look to work on legislation in the 2025 session. Markets are key concern, along with potential cost impacts to large food scrap generators and lack of statewide infrastructure.
- Likely to model laws in CT and MA that focus on large commercial generators, located within a specific distance of an existing compost site first. Then gradually expand the number of generators required to have food scraps collected and composted.
- CA law mandating residential collection is having growing pains, but programs and facilities are being built to meet the requirements of the law. Need to learn from other laws in the U.S.
- Key stakeholders with concerns include the waste industry, large food processing companies, grocery stores, large restaurants, and local government.
- Focus on market development needs to be first step in SWALCO's opinion. Key users that need to be engaged are IDOT and County engineers for road project use and State of IL and private farmers for use on farm land. Also increased residential use.

Thank you! Questions?

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