



State of Vermont  
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Waste Management & Prevention Division  
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AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES

January 13, 2014

RE: Vermont's Universal Recycling Law (Act 148) & Management of Food Scraps

Dear Business Owner or Facility Manager,

You are receiving this letter because your business, institution, or facility likely produces significant volumes of food scraps, requiring your compliance with a new solid waste law—Vermont's Universal Recycling law (Act 148). Universal Recycling was passed unanimously by the Vermont Legislature in 2012 to help reduce the amount of reusable and recyclable material (including compostables) that goes to the landfill, saving resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The law calls for a phased-in ban on landfill disposal of listed recyclables, leaf and yard debris, clean wood debris, and food scraps. Universal Recycling will also provide more convenience by requiring solid waste haulers and transfer stations to offer collection services for these materials.

The disposal ban on food scraps is phased in based on the amount of food scraps your business or institution produces. In accordance with the Universal Recycling law any business or institution generating more than 104 tons of food scraps per year (approximately 2 tons/week), which is located within 20 miles of a certified facility with existing capacity and a willingness to accept the material, must separate these food scraps beginning **July 1, 2014**. Each following year those generating smaller and smaller quantities of food scraps are required to separate this material culminating in a full ban and requirement that all food scraps be separated by 2020. A list of certified facilities and haulers currently collecting food scraps from large generators can be found on our Universal Recycling webpage at [www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/Act148.htm](http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/Act148.htm). We expect this list to grow in the coming months and years as Universal Recycling is phased in.

The Vermont Food Recovery Hierarchy (shown below) establishes priority uses for separated food scraps. As much as possible ANR encourages businesses and institutions to first find ways to reduce wasted food. Second, ANR encourages you to donate quality food to food shelves, nonprofits, and institutions that can feed that food to people in need. Contact the Vermont Foodbank or your local food shelf for information on donating excess quality food. Finally, to provide logistical support the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) is in the process of developing a web-based map to indicate the proximity of food scrap generators to facilities that accept food scraps. This user friendly map is intended to help make these connections and encourage diversion within the hierarchy. This map and additional resources will be available on our Universal Recycling webpage at: [www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/Act148.htm](http://www.anr.state.vt.us/dec/wastediv/solid/Act148.htm).



Below is a timeline of the various requirements of the Universal Recycling law:<sup>1</sup>

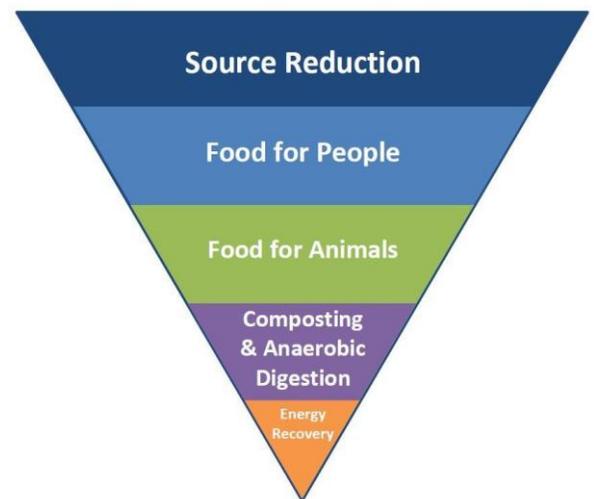
Listed Recyclables<sup>2</sup>:

- Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept residential recyclables starting **July 1, 2014**
- Haulers of trash must offer recycling collection starting **July 1, 2015**
- Recyclables are banned from the landfill starting **July 1, 2015**
- Recycling containers must be provided alongside trash containers in all public (state, county, or municipal) buildings and lands (with the exception of restrooms) starting **July 1, 2015**

Food Scraps – The following generators must separate and divert food scraps by the corresponding date if a certified organics management facility (composting facility or anaerobic digester) is located within 20 miles and has available capacity and is willing to accept these materials. Generators may also donate quality food to food shelves, provide appropriate food scraps to farmers for animal feed, and are allowed to manage food scraps onsite, provided certain requirements are met:

- Generators of 104 tons/year (2 tons/week) must separate food scraps starting **July 1, 2014**
- Generators of 52 tons/year (1 ton/week) must separate food scraps starting **July 1, 2015**
- Generators of 26 tons/year (1/2 ton/week) must separate food scraps starting **July 1, 2016**
- Generators of 18 tons/year (1/3 ton/week) must separate food scraps starting **July 1, 2017**
- Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept food scraps starting **July 1, 2017**
- Haulers of trash must offer food scrap collection starting **July 1, 2017**
- **July 1, 2020** all food scraps are banned from the landfill

### Vermont Food Recovery Hierarchy



Leaf, Yard, and Clean Wood Debris:

- Transfer stations/Drop-off Facilities must accept leaf and yard debris starting **July 1, 2015**
- Haulers of trash must offer leaf and yard debris collection starting **July 1, 2016**
- Leaf, yard, and clean wood debris are banned from the landfill starting **July 1, 2016**

If you have questions about the law or need assistance starting a program to separate, manage and divert food scraps for collection, please contact your local solid waste district, alliance, or town or contact me at (802) 522-5897 or at [josh.kelly@state.vt.us](mailto:josh.kelly@state.vt.us). We would like to assist you with this transition and in developing a diversion program for your location.

Sincerely,

Josh Kelly  
Waste Management & Prevention Division

<sup>1</sup> Contact your Solid Waste District, Alliance or town for information on additional local solid waste requirements and ordinances.

<sup>2</sup> Listed recyclables include: metal cans, aluminum foil and pie plates; glass bottles and jars; PET and HPDE plastic bottles and containers; corrugated cardboard; white and mixed paper; newspaper, magazines, mail; and box board.