

For Haulers**How to Collect Food Scraps****1. Ask your composter what they accept**

- **Most accept all food scraps:** meat, bones, seafood, shellfish and shells, all dairy, eggs and egg shells, spoiled food, baked goods, coffee grounds and filters, tea bags, fruits and vegetables, pasta and grains, soups, sauces, fats and oils (cooled).
- **Some may accept:** waxed cardboard, dirty paper, paper napkins, paper plates, paper clam shells or to-go containers, compostable liner bags, compostable cups, bowls, and utensils that are certified compostable by the [Biodegradable Products Institute](#) (BPI).
- **Some avoid** compostable or paper products because they may look like trash and cause confusion about what the composter accepts. Also, certain compostable products prevent compost from being certified organic.
- **All Avoid:** plastic bags, wrappers, plastic PLU stickers on produce, twist ties, or other plastic, metal, or glass.

Download FREE bin signs:

<http://dec.vermont.gov/sites/dec/files/wmp/SolidWaste/Images/VTANR-Bin-SIGNS-8.5x11.pdf>

**2. Containers**

- **Most food scrap haulers** use plastic rolling carts, typically 32, 48, or 64-gallon capacity. Some use dumpsters. Some haulers use 5-gallon buckets with lids. A 48-gallon container of food scraps weighs an average of 200 lbs. or 4.2 lbs. per gallon. If carts are too big or full they can break and leak. Carts or totes can be purchased from various vendors. Contact the ANR Solid Waste Program, your [solid waste management entity](#), or another hauler to see what equipment has worked well for others and options for a bulk purchase.
- **Some haulers** purchase and use certified compostable liner bags inside the carts to reduce the need to wash bins. Ask your composter if they accept certified compostable bags (visit BPI's website for options: products.bpiworld.org/?search=&category=26&ty%pe=2).



3. Vehicles

Some food scrap haulers have trucks that lift and tip plastic carts into the sealed body unit of the truck. Others use box trucks with lift gates or trailers and swap out full carts for empties. Some collect food scraps with station wagons or bicycles.

[BioCycle Magazine](#) has a lot of information on trucks for hauling food scraps. Some trucks and trailers have pressure washers to wash carts. Some haulers wash carts at the compost facility.

Winter Tips:

- To keep food scraps from sticking to the cart, grease empty carts with used vegetable oil and add ~6 inches of sawdust or wood chips to the bottom.
- Bang the sides of frozen carts with a rubber mallet to help dislodge frozen food scraps.
- Tip carts upside down on a bed of wood chips in the sun or put carts in a warm space overnight to release frozen foods scraps.
- Some food scrap haulers use a torch to melt and re-bond cracks in plastic carts.

Summer Tips:

To reduce odors and insects in the heat:

- Provide customers with bins of sawdust, ground leaves, or wood chips to top off their food scrap carts each day. Two to three inches of sawdust keeps flies and odors down, which customers appreciate.
- Provide customer with clean totes by washing them weekly or using liners. Keep the outside of totes clean.
- Collect food scraps regularly.

Resources:

- Annual [Vermont Organics Recycling Summit](#), where haulers and composters network and learn from each other. In 2019, the [Composting Association of Vermont](#) will host this event.
- Annual Compost Operator Trainings, which ANR hosts and Compost Technical Services teaches ([composttechnicalservices.com](#)).
- The Highfields Center for Composting’s website shares videos and other resources for hauling food scraps and composting: [highfieldscomposting.org/haulers/resources-for-haulers](#)
- [Statewide Directory of Food Scrap Haulers](#): To be listed, please contact the ANR Solid Waste Program at 802-828-1138.

Solid Waste Program
802-828-1138
www.VTrecycles.com