

Food Composting & Biodegradable Plastics

Why we care

Composting food scraps reduces methane production in landfills, returns nutrients to the soil, and can even produce energy. Here in the metropolitan area, the rules are different for residences compared to commercial buildings (schools, offices, apartments, etc.) Our residential organics go to a North Plains composting site, which can accept yard debris and paper towels along with food. However, organic waste collected from commercial buildings must be food only because it generally goes to a biodigester in Junction City. Companies, selling cups, cutlery, and other “biodegradable” products may say they are compostable, but they are NOT where we live.

Simple, positive steps

With the exception of BPI-certified compostable bags to contain food scraps, any plastics with the following labels must go into the trash:

- *Bioplastics*
- *Degradable*
- *Biodegradable*
- *Compostable*

Avoid purchasing the plastics listed above.

- They [cause problems at composting facilities](#) because they don't always degrade fast enough. No one wants bits of plastic in their finished compost.
- Nor are they recyclable. Because they are difficult to distinguish from regular plastics, they create problems for any entity that collects non-curbide plastics.

Switch to washable cups, plates, and utensils at home and work.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@ecoschoolnetwork.org.

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