

Medfield Food Composting Q&A's

1 WHAT IS THE FOOD COMPOSTING PROGRAM AT THE MEDFIELD TRANSFER STATION?

This program enables residents to divert food waste from the trash/tip floor to containers that will be collected for composting

2 WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROGRAM?

According to the MassDEP, food waste is 20% of trash by weight. Our goal is to turn this waste into a valuable resource, compost, which can improve the nutrient value of soil. It is less expensive to compost per ton than to haul and incinerate. These cost savings are another reason for the program.

3 DOES THIS COST RESIDENTS MONEY?

The transportation costs are being funded through the Town's operating budget. The Town's cost is less than \$175 per month. Purchase of a compost starter kit is optional. A Transfer Station sticker is required.

4 WHAT EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM?

You will need a container to transport your food waste to the Transfer Station. We recommend that you don't use plastic bags. Plastic bags cannot be placed in the food waste toters/barrels. You could use a pail from home or an old kitty litter pail. Also, Starter kits are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Two options are available. The first is a 3.5 gallon pail with animal-proof, and odor-proof lid, a kitchen scrap bucket and two rolls of biodegradable liners (50). The cost is \$15, including sales tax. The second option is a kitchen scrap bucket and 50 biodegradable liners. The cost is \$5, including sales tax. The equipment can be purchased at the Department of Works Building/Town Garage office 55 North Meadows Rd. from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. M – F (except 1-2 p.m.). We thank The Garden Continuum for their sponsorship of the starter kits.

5 WHERE IS FOOD COMPOSTING SET-UP AT THE TRANSFER STATION?

Food waste toters/barrels are placed between the windows on the tip floor. The containers are emptied weekly and taken to a commercial composting facility in Medway.

6 WHAT IS BEING DONE TO KEEP THE ODOR DOWN, AND KEEP OUT PESTS AT THE TOTERS/BARRELS?

The toters/barrels have lids that will remain down between resident usage. The food waste is collected weekly. The toters/barrels are secured with bungey cords at night.

7 WHAT CAN AND CANNOT BE COMPOSTED?

All foods including meat, seafood, cheese and bones are accepted. Please do not include liquids, oils or grease. Composting guidelines are posted on the lids of the toters at the Transfer Station. You can also find these guidelines on Medfield.net under Transfer Station. At this time we cannot compost any compostable dishes, containers or utensils. Also, paper towels and napkins should not be included.

8 HOW CAN I KEEP DOWN ODORS?

Our starter kit kitchen scrap bucket and biodegradable liners have lots of ventilation to let heat escape and moisture evaporate. This dries out food scraps and slows down the rotting process, practically eliminating odor. Keep your bucket on the counter, or under your kitchen sink. When your kitchen scrap bucket is full, transfer the compost to your transport pail. The kitchen scrap bucket can be cleaned in your dishwasher's top rack.

The pail has a gasket lid that contains odor. We recommend that you keep this pail in your garage or outside in a shady area. Clean the pail with soap and water. Drain the water onto a grassy area to avoid getting the wash water in catch basins.

Another idea is to keep your compost in your freezer until you are ready to come to the transfer station. If you have room in your freezer, this is ideal. Keeping a container with food waste in your refrigerator is also an option.

9 DO I NEED TO USE BIODEGRADABLE LINERS AND WHERE CAN I PURCHASE ADDITIONAL BIODEGRADABLE LINERS?

No, you do not need to use a biodegradable liner. You can place your food in the toter/barrel in a paper bag or just dump it in. Please remember PLASTIC BAGS CANNOT BE DEPOSITED. The biodegradable liners are one method that can be used. Additional liners can be purchased at Wills Hardware for \$3.75 a roll. This is a significant discount over customary retail. Only use bags that have the BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute) logo. This assures you that the bags/liners are truly compostable and biodegradable.

10 ARE OTHER COMMUNITIES DOING THIS?

Yes. Sherborn, Manchester-by-the-Sea, Hamilton and Wenham have similar programs. The Town of Dover provides limited food waste pick-up that is used to feed pigs at Powisset Farm.

11 I ALREADY BACKYARD COMPOST, OR HAVE A SINK DISPOSAL. SO THIS PROGRAM DOESN'T APPLY TO ME, RIGHT?

We encourage backyard composters to use the Transfer Station's food waste containers for meat, fish, cheese, and bones. Because the temperature of the compost piles at the commercial facility reach higher temperatures, these items can be composted in this program.

Those that have sink disposals should use the Transfer Station's food waste containers for fibrous foods such as corn husks, bones, and fruit pits. What all residents should avoid is putting oil or grease down the drain where it can cause sewer blockages. Keep a jar under the sink to pour oil and grease into. Place a lid on the jar and throw into the trash.

THIS IS A PROJECT OF THE DPW AND TRANSFER STATION AND RECYCLING COMMITTEE.
IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, CALL (508) 906-3003.

