

FACT SHEET

City-Wide Mandatory Organics Program



Food/yard waste collected at the curb for all households that can be processed into a valuable product such as compost or energy.

What are organic materials?

Organic refers to any material that can (eventually and under the right conditions) decompose. Municipal organics programs usually include food scraps (fruit, vegetables, grains, oils, meat, and bones), yard waste (leaves, grass, garden waste, and some small branches) and soiled paper (paper towels, cardboard, tissues). Some programs will include more difficult to process items such as pet waste and diapers.

Everything is on the table.

How will this work?

The exact details of the mandatory organics program are under evaluation. Options are being considered for acceptable materials (food and/or yard waste), cart size, how and when they are collected, and processing.



Food + Yard Waste



Cart Sizes



Frequency

WHY DO WE NEED THIS?

More than 1/2 of what we throw out can be composted

32,200 tonnes, or 58%, of food and yard waste is collected in black carts every year and our landfill is filling up. At our current rate, it will need replacing in the coming years at a cost of at least \$125 million.



Organics don't decompose properly in the landfill and take up needed space

Organic materials need air to decompose properly, so when buried in a landfill where there is no oxygen, it can take a very long time to decompose. Organic materials are still recognizable even after ten to fifteen years, much longer for paper.



We need to make organics available to everyone

Our current green cart program has grown significantly to over 8,000 subscribers, but this is still only 11% of eligible households. We need a city-wide, mandatory program to capture organics from the remaining 89% of households.

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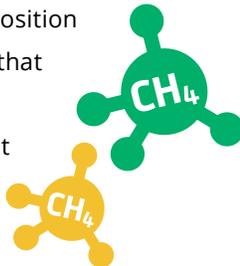
WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES?

Extends the life of the landfill by saving space

By removing more than 32,200 tonnes of organic material from the landfill we save valuable air space deferring or eliminating our need to replace our landfill. As of 2010, each cubic meter of airspace at the Landfill has a value of \$90.

Reduces greenhouse gases

Methane is produced when materials decompose in a landfill. Without oxygen, decomposition happens anaerobically which means that methane is produced. Methane is a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than carbon dioxide and contributes to climate change.



Reduces the harmful impacts of leachate in the landfill

Leachate is water that has come into contact with organic waste in a landfill or compost facility. Leachate can contaminate surrounding water/land and needs to be managed under strict environmental regulations.

Organics for all

Ensuring that every curbside household has an organics program means that we can reduce garbage by up to 58% with composting.



Composting or digesting leads to a valuable product

If managed properly through composting or anaerobic digestion, organic material can be turned into valuable products like compost and energy.

Thank you backyard composters!

You make a difference

The City appreciates the approximately 25% of people that compost at home, it's a great way to divert material from the landfill and produce compost to enhance your own lawn and garden. However, it's not for everyone, so we still need city-wide organics to capture the remaining material going to landfill. Some materials, like bones, meat, and oil cannot be composted at home. The advantage of a city-wide program is that these can now also be composted.