

WESTPORT'S ZERO FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE

HOW IT WAS STARTED; HOW IT'S GOING; THE FUTURE

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CACIWC Annual Conference

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ON A MISSION TO CREATE A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Sustainable Westport: An Introduction



TOWN OF WESTPORT

DEMOGRAPHICS

- 28,000+ population*
- 8 schools
- Poverty rate 4.15%*
- Median household income \$206,466*
- No Town-wide solid waste pick-up:
 - transfer station or private hauler

*Data USA



TOWN OF WESTPORT RESOLUTION

Net Zero by 2050

Goal: The community has reduced its impacts across

- energy
- water and
- waste

so that they are sustainably managed, using approaches that are:

- economically viable
- of social benefit
- environmentally responsible




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OUR MISSION



SOLID WASTE CRISIS

Increasing Costs; In Need of Solutions

CONNECTICUT'S WASTE PROBLEM

- Over 22% of CT's Solid Waste (trash) is FOOD
- CT burns trash: "waste to energy"; CT has no municipal landfills
- 40% of our trash goes to Ohio and Pennsylvania landfills
- Food waste is heavy, expensive to transport, burns poorly in CT's Waste-to-Energy Incinerators and...
- *EPA report found 58% of fugitive methane emissions at MSW landfills came from wasted food*

NEW EPA WASTED FOOD SCALE



Wasted Food Scale

How to reduce the environmental impacts of wasted food



October 2023

SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT' GOAL



- **Westport residential solid waste: 10,000 tons/year**
- **Residential Food Scraps: 2,200 tons/year**
- **25% of Residential Food Scraps: 550 tons/year**



ZERO FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE

THREE WAYS TO DECREASE WASTED FOOD IN THE SOLID WASTE STREAM

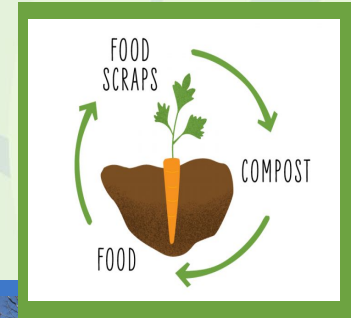
- Buy only what you need, manage food well
- Redistribute Food
- Food Scrap Recycling

THREE WAYS TO PARTICIPATE IN FOOD SCRAP RECYCLING

- Food Scrap Hauler (private pay)
- Home Compost
- Westport Transfer Station Drop-off (free)



SCAN TO LEARN MORE




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REDISTRIBUTE FOOD

- Gillespie Center and Homes with Hope
- Grow-a-Row (at Westport Farmers Market)
- Food Rescue US - Fairfield County food distribution



WASTE FREE GREENWICH'S PROGRAM



Waste Free Greenwich - Food Scrap Recycling

Jan Davies




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FOOD SCRAP RECYCLING IN WESTPORT

The Town of Westport has launched a food scrap recycling program! Residents can now bring ALL food scraps to the Food Scrap Drop-Off Area at the Westport Transfer Station. The material is then brought to a commercial compost facility and turned into soil! All food scraps are accepted (more than just backyard composting items) including:

- FRUITS
- VEGETABLES
- MEAT & FISH
- DAIRY
- BREAD
- RICE
- PASTA
- RAW & COOKED FOOD
- CUT FLOWERS
- COFFEE GROUNDS & FILTERS
- PAPER TEA BAGS
- NAPKINS & PAPER TOWELS*
- WAX PAPER
- AND MORE! For a complete list visit SustainableWestport.org

*No napkins or paper towels that have been used with chemical cleaners

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Bring food waste to the transfer station in a lidded, leak-proof container, or use a starter kit, as follows:

- 1 COLLECT** food scraps & paper products in a countertop pail using BPI Certified compostable bags. No stickers, twist ties or rubber bands.
- 2 STORE** bags of food scraps in a storage and transportation bin
- 3 BRING** your storage and transportation bin to the Transfer Station and empty into the larger bins at the Food Scrap Drop-Off Area

WHAT DO I NEED TO START?

Although they are not required, food scrap recycling "starter kits" make it easy. Kits are \$25/kit (discounts available for income-eligible) and include:

- Countertop pail
- Storage and transportation bin
- Roll of 25 compostable bags

Kits and additional compostable bags are available at Earthplace
10 Woodside Lane, Westport

Questions?

Visit SustainableWestport.org or Contact Compost@WestportCT.gov

Westport Transfer Station

300 Sherwood Island Connector
Mon-Fri 7am-2:30pm, Sat 7am-noon

TRANSFER STATION FOOD SCRAP RECYCLING

- Collect food in a lidded container
- Bring to transfer station
- Empty container into large green toter
- Food scraps are brought to a composting site (New Milford) or anaerobic digester (Southington)
- Compost given to public for free (year one)



COLLECTION SYSTEMS

MANY OPTIONS FOR FOOD SCRAPS COLLECTION

- **Westport Starter kits (\$25)***
- **Or any lidded container**
- **May be lined with BPI-certified**
Compostable bag**



*Free to income-eligible

**Biodegradable Products Institute


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WHAT CAN BE COMPOSTED at TRANSFER STATION



ALL FOOD SCRAPS ARE ACCEPTED INCLUDING:

- Animal-based food scraps (including bones)
- Fish & Shellfish
- Coffee grounds & filters
- Eggshells
- Cut flowers



SCAN FOR A FULL LIST
OF COMPOSTABLE ITEMS

PRE-CHALLENGE

- IDENTIFIED TEAM
- GATHERED INFORMATION FROM OTHER TOWNS
- IDENTIFIED GOAL
- DEVELOPED GUIDELINES AND LITERATURE

DEVELOPED PROTOCOLS AND LITERATURE



PUT YOUR BANANA PEELS TO GOOD USE

If we separate food scraps from the rest of our trash, they can be composted. The results?

- Cleaner air and water
- More fertile and resilient soil
- Less incinerator ash to truck to a landfill

WHERE DO MY BANANA PEELS CURRENTLY GO?

You might not know this, but Westport's solid waste is incinerated—and food scraps are wet and heavy, so they don't burn well. Plus, they are expensive to transport.



COMPOSTING IS EASIER THAN YOU THINK

In Westport, you have three options for keeping your food scraps out of the incinerator:

1. Drop them off at the transfer station! This is a FREE and easy choice.
2. Have your food scraps picked up curbside by a licensed food scrap hauler.
3. Compost at home—also FREE!

→ See reverse side for more information on all three options.

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Did you know that an astonishing 30–40% of the U.S. food supply goes to waste? Just a little planning can help you waste less of the food you buy. A few tips:

- Plan meals before you go grocery shopping.
- Preserve (or eat!) food before it spoils.
- Move expiring food to the front of your fridge.
- Don't "over-prepare" by cooking too much food.
- Save (and enjoy eating!) leftovers.

25%

BE A FOOD SCRAP HERO!

Help Westport meet our goal to divert 25% of residential food scraps from the waste stream.



Sustainable Westport, a non-profit partner organization of Earthplace, is committed to transforming Westport into a thriving, sustainable, model community. Through collective action we can create a sustainable future.

3 WAYS TO RECYCLE FOOD SCRAPS

OPTION 1: DROP-OFF AT THE WESTPORT TRANSFER STATION

- **COLLECT** all food scraps in a countertop pail. You may use BPI Certified compostable bags. No stickers, twist ties or rubber bands.
- **STORE** food scraps in a storage and transportation bin.
- **BRING** your storage and transportation bin to the transfer station and empty food scraps into the larger bins at the Food Scrap Drop-Off Area.

Although it is not required, a food scrap recycling "starter kit" makes it easy. Kits are \$25 each (discounts available for income-eligible) and include: a countertop pail, a storage and transportation bin and a roll of BPI Certified compostable bags. Kits are available at Earthplace (address below).

OPTION 2: HAVE YOUR FOOD SCRAPS PICKED UP

Hire a Westport-licensed food scrap hauler to pick up your food scraps curbside, at your home. As with the transfer station drop-off site, you can recycle ALL food scraps, including animal-based foods such as meat, bones, fish, cheese, and oils. Visit SustainableWestport.org for information about food scrap haulers in Westport, and monthly fees.

OPTION 3: COMPOST AT HOME

Not sure how? Visit SustainableWestport.org to learn. Note: it is generally recommended that no animal-based foods be put in a home composting system.



WHAT EXACTLY COUNTS AS A "FOOD SCRAP"?

The following list includes some of the MANY items accepted at the Food Scrap Drop-Off Area at the Westport Transfer Station. Note that this list includes some items that are not recommended for backyard composting.

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|--|
| • FRUITS | • RICE | • PAPER TEA BAGS |
| • VEGETABLES | • PASTA | • NAPKINS & PAPER TOWELS* |
| • MEAT & FISH | • RAW & COOKED FOOD | • AND MORE! |
| • DAIRY | • CUT FLOWERS | For a complete list visit |
| • BREAD | • COFFEE GROUNDS & FILTERS | SustainableWestport.org |

*No napkins or paper towels that have been used with any cleaners.



Questions?
Visit SustainableWestport.org or contact Compost@WestportCT.gov

Westport Transfer Station
300 Sherwood Island Connector
Mon–Fri 7am–2:30pm, Sat 7am–noon

Kits and additional compostable bags are available at:
Earthplace, 10 Woodside Lane, Westport

Compostable bags are also available at:
Westport Hardware, 616 Post Rd E, Westport

Design and illustration: Lisa Mezzoff



IDENTIFIED MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

WESTPORT
JOURNAL

06880

Where Westport meets the world



HELP US REACH
OUR GOAL!

ONLY \$1,000 LEFT

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY FOR SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT TO RECEIVE A MATCHING DOLLAR GRANT FOR ITS FOOD SCRAPS RECYCLING PROGRAM.

THE ZERO FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE

TO DECREASE WESTPORT'S RESIDENTIAL FOOD WASTE BY 25% OR MORE

Join us at our challenge kick-off

Keynote Speaker: Lori Fontanes
"Climate Change and the Food System"

Proclamation: Read by First Selectman, Jim Marpe

APRIL
22

Wednesday, April 22, 6:30-8pm

Westport Library, 20 Jesup Lane



How do I join the Zero Food Waste Challenge?

- Get to know the food you waste
- Change the way you plan, prepare and preserve food
- Compost!
- Distribute surplus food to those who need it

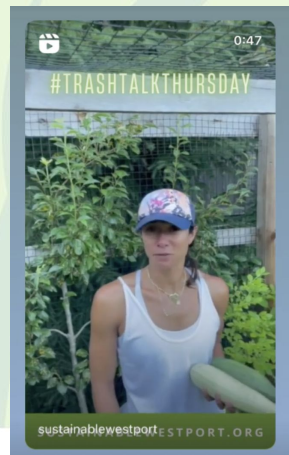


NEW, FREE Food Scraps Recycling, starting April 18, 2020. Come to the kick-off to learn more.

Visit SustainableWestport.org to find out more about the Zero Food Waste Challenge and Westport's mission to go Net Zero by 2050.



Instagram



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EDUCATED VOLUNTEERS

When in Doubt, Throw it Out!



ENGAGE COMMUNITY IN SUSTAINABLE EVENT-PLANNING

Goal:

To get event organizers to integrate zero waste into their event planning



ZERO FOOD WASTE PROMOTION

Diverted almost 2,000 pounds of food waste at 2023 Lobsterfest!



Rethink the Feast: How to Reduce Food Waste on Thanksgiving:

SLICE OF SAUGATUCK CELEBRATION

Plan Ahead

Consider Vegan/Vegetarian

Dishes

Repurpose or Compost Scraps

Take Your leftovers Seriously

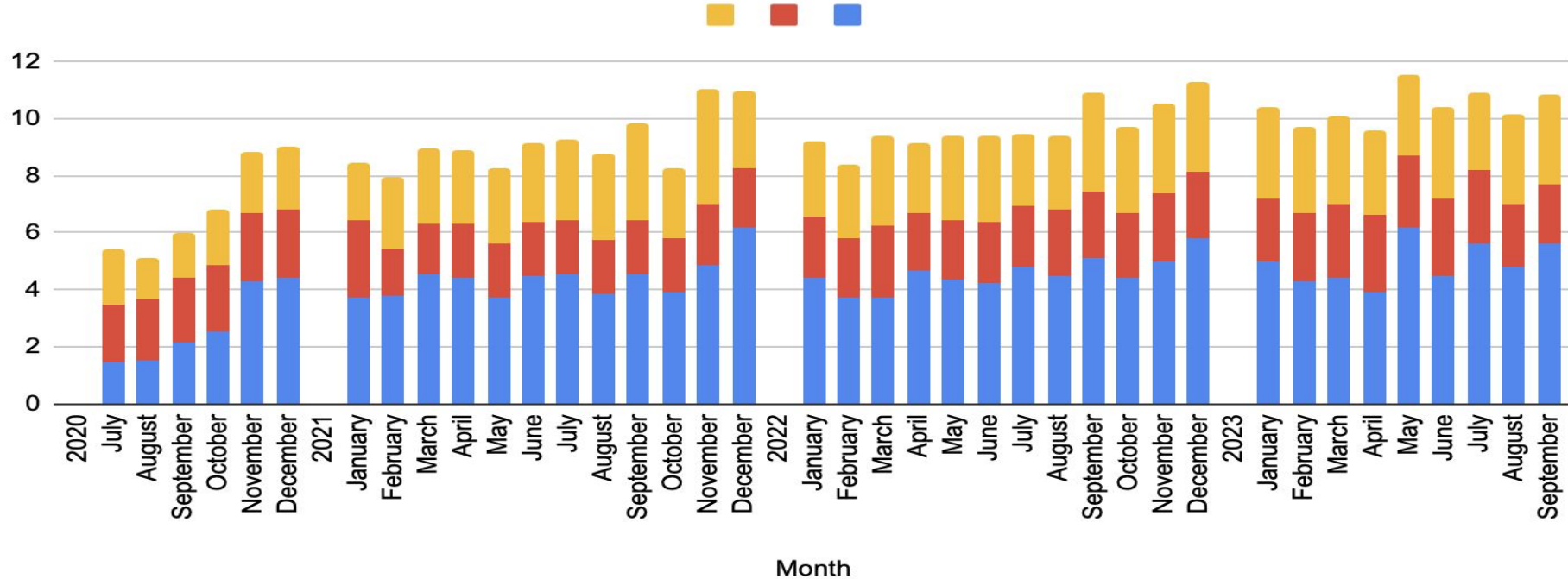
Give Away Leftovers



ZERO FOOD WASTE PROGRESS 2020-PRESENT

Tonnage collected 2020-2023
(red) Action Waste (yellow).

Transfer Station(blue), Curbside Compost
Goal: 46 tons/month



WHY AREN'T MORE RESIDENTS PARTICIPATING?

Lack of convenience

Lack of knowledge as to its importance

Lack of awareness

The “ick” factor

Cost of service

Doing enough with regular recycling

Time pressure

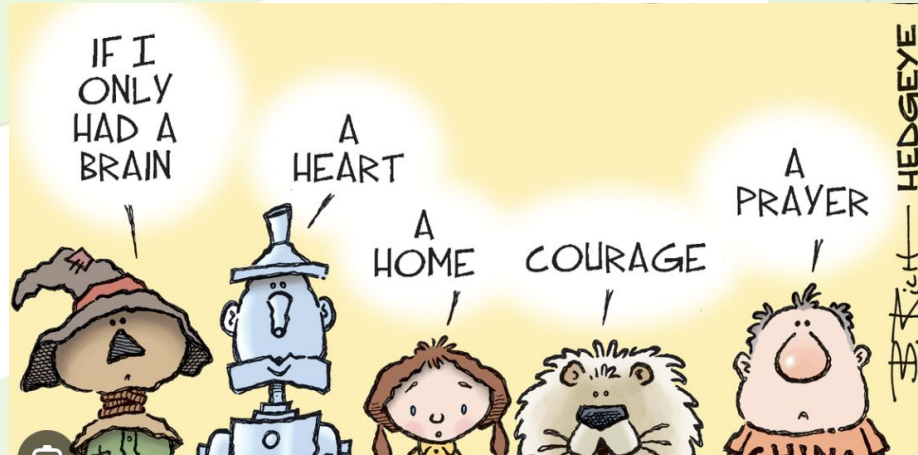
CHANGE IS HARD.....

* From Curbside Compost Survey of 3 programs



WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION?

MAKE FOOD SCRAP RECYCLING COMPULSORY!!



WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION?



Pay As You Throw (PAYT) aka Unit Based Pricing!!

From Stonington, CT website

- Pay for the amount of trash and food scraps you throw out
- Factored into the cost of these bags is the cost of transportation and disposal at the Waste to Energy facility
- Treats trash like other utilities (electricity, water, natural gas)
- Reduces the tons of trash generated and therefore reduces disposal costs by as much as **45-60%**

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION?

Locally:

- Promotion by more Town Influencers
- More locations to Recycle Food Scraps
- Town ordinance that requires Residential Food Scrap Recycling

Statewide:

- More support to implement current solid waste programs
- More options and funding for recycling food scraps
- Enforcement of solid waste laws

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE PARTICIPATION?

Legislatively at State Level:

- Lower 26 tons/year threshold for commercial entities
- Provide funding to meet law requirements
- Require Residential Food Scrap Recycling

SUSTAINABLE WESTPORT



@SustainableWestport

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QUESTIONS?

- ZeroWaste@sustainablewestport.org



SUSTAINABLEWESTPORT.ORG

