How To...

SUSTAINABILITY OPPORTUNITY

Waste audits from campus buildings reveal that 30% of the trash Stanford sends to the landfill is actually organic material. In the landfill, anaerobic decay of food waste releases methane, which has 23 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. Composting greatly reduces these emissions. All of Stanford’s dining halls and more than half of the cafes on campus have active composting programs. Interested buildings and departments can start a voluntary office composting program to further the university’s composting efforts.

HERE’S HOW:

1) Plan & Prepare

- Determine what type of compostables the program will collect: just coffee grounds, filters, and tea bags, all fruit and vegetables, all food, or all food and compostable containers. Stanford’s compost program can accept all types of food and Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI) certified compostable containers.

- Determine the location of the nearest food waste collection point by contacting PSSI/Stanford Recycling Center (650-321-4236, recycling@pssi.stanford.edu).

- Determine who will volunteer to monitor the compost collection, empty it on a regular schedule, and clean the bin consistently.

- Determine the location of the compost bin. A kitchen or break room location is recommended.

COMPOSTABLES
kitchen and yard waste only

- All Food
- Paper Plates & Napkins
  * including pizza & donut boxes
- Compostable & Biodegradable Plastics
- Plants, Leaves & Wood

NO Human or Animal Waste
NO Bathroom or Facial Tissue
2) Act & Implement

- Please contact PSSI to order an authorized compost container to collect food scraps, compostable serviceware, and other compostable items.
- Replace all purchases of disposable service ware with compostable service ware. Purchase only BPI-certified products (plates, towels, cups, knives, forks, spoons). Replace plastic coffee stirrers with wood stirrers or reusable spoons. Compostable service ware and BPI-certified compostable bin liners can be purchased through SmartMart. The shared favorites folder “Compostable Break Room Supplies” helps identify more than 40 suitable items.
- Affix the university’s compost collection label to the bin (visit recycling.stanford.edu to download labels). Empty the compost either daily or every other day to minimize odors and bugs. Keep the lid closed. Placing paper towels or newspapers at the bottom of the bin helps minimize liquid collection. Baking soda will help reduce odors.
- At this point, custodians are not responsible for emptying the compost bin unless specifically contracted to do so. Please communicate with your custodial staff to make sure everyone is aware of the program and their responsibilities.

3) Publicize & Launch

- Spread the word about the new composting program. Schedule an educational staff meeting and/or send an email announcing the program and its parameters.
- Continue volunteer recruitment to help with the emptying schedule.
- Send congratulatory notices to building occupants detailing how much material has been composted.
- If contamination (non-compostable material) is discovered, be sure to reeducate building occupants.