

9.4 Compost Organic Waste

15 Points

30 Points

Action Updates

This action was last updated in 2025. The previous version of this action is [available for comparison](#). Edits are highlighted in yellow.

Objective

Reduce or eliminate food and organic waste and increase food scraps recovery.

Complementary Action:

- [Recycle Additional Materials](#)
- [Promote Waste Reduction and Reuse](#)

What to Do

Note: Recycling of leaves is mandatory in CT, and grass clippings are banned from disposal, so programs for either of these items are not eligible for points.

1. Implement a program to divert food waste or other non-mandated organic waste that diverts source-separated organics from disposal for composting at a municipal facility or at an off-site permitted composting or anaerobic digesting facility. Examples of programs eligible for points under this Action are listed below. Leaf and yard waste collection programs are not eligible for points under this Action. **(15 points per program, up to 30 points)**
 - Implement curbside collection of food waste for residents and/or businesses.
 - Implement a food waste recovery program at one or more schools in your community.
 - Provide an opportunity for food and/or organic waste collection at your transfer station.

Submit: Evidence of current implementation for each food waste or non-mandated organic waste program (such as a municipal contract, ordinance, partnership letter, website hyperlink with screenshot, or annual report listing your municipality as a compost program participant, or other documentation). If you collaborated with a nonprofit or business to collect or compost organic waste, you must submit a partnership letter or alternative documentation of the partnership that specifies that services have been provided within the past three years (please describe in the "partners" box of your submission). Alternative documentation could include a website hyperlink and screenshot of the website or annual report of the partner organization which lists your municipality as participating in the organics waste diversion program.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the ["Partners Guidance Document"](#).

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

The municipal recycling coordinator, public works department director, or other appropriate municipal staff involved in materials management should be involved in the implementation of this Action. Community partners include representatives from the target sectors involved.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the [Sustainable CT Grants Portal](#), which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the [Support for Your Town](#) page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- [Urban Act Grant Program](#)
- [Sustainable CT Community Match Fund](#)
- [State Funding Readiness Project](#)
- [Sustainable Materials Management Round 2 \(SMMR2\)](#)
- [Composting for Community Mini-Grant Program](#)

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- [Sustainable CT: Examining Organics Diversion in Connecticut](#)
- [Legal Fact Sheet for Connecticut Food Donation: Date Labeling Laws](#)
- [Legal Fact Sheet for Connecticut Food Donation: Liability Protections](#)
- [Legal Fact Sheet for Connecticut Food Donation: Tax Incentives for Businesses](#)
- [Phood: Commercial Waste Prevention Program](#)
- Oregon's [Wasted Food Wasted Money](#)
- NRDC and Ad Council "[Save the Food](#)" campaign
- RecyclingWorks [Food Waste Estimator Tool](#)
- Center for EcoTechnology's [Wasted Food Solutions](#)
- Center for EcoTechnology's [Food Donation by Connecticut Schools](#)
- [EPA Food Scraps](#)
- [EPA Food too Good to Waste Guide](#)
- [EPA Small Business Guide on Preventing Waste](#)
- [Managing Food Waste for Sustainability: Composting versus Landfills](#)
- [USDA Food Product Dating](#)
- Institute for Local Self-Reliance "[Yes! In my Backyard: A Home Composting Guide for Local Government](#)"
- [EPA's Sustainable Management of Food](#); Excess Food Opportunities Map

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- CT DEEP, [Food Waste Reduction and Recovery](#)
- CT DEEP, [Composting and Organics Recycling](#)
- CT DEEP, [Potential Sources of Compost in Connecticut](#)
- [Center for Ecotechnology](#) offers free technical assistance.
 - Center for Ecotechnology, [Wilton, CT Case Study](#)
- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), [Sustainable Management of Food](#)

Why This Matters

The primary component of solid waste in Connecticut is organic waste, most of which is discarded food. Through composting, food waste can become a precious agricultural resource (organic fertilizer). When food waste goes into landfills, it does not decompose, but rather off-gases methane. Not only does the off-gassing contribute to climate change, but also that earth-friendly fertilizer resource is lost.

Benefits

When you reduce the food waste in your community, you also lower the adverse environmental impacts on your

air and water supply, reduce your greenhouse gas emissions, and decrease your solid municipal waste. As a result, both the sector targeted by your campaign and your municipality will save money through less over-purchasing and reduced disposal costs.

CT Success Stories

- [Granby - Sep 2023 Certification](#)
- [Middletown - Sep 2023 Certification](#)
- [Durham - May 2024 Certification](#)
- [Ellington - May 2024 Certification](#)
- [East Haddam - May 2024 Certification](#)
- [Fairfield - Oct 2024 Certification](#)
- [Southbury - Oct 2024 Certification](#)