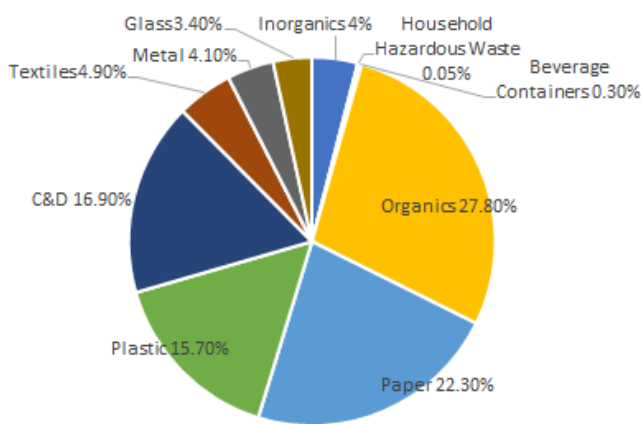


# MUNICIPAL COMPOSTING

Composting is nature's way of recycling. It is the process that converts organic material, including food scraps and yard waste, into nutrient-rich, fertile soil that can be used to grow more food and other plants. By composting our post-consumer food, we **transform these scraps from waste into a vital resource**.



Across the nation, composting is developing as a viable, locally-based industry that achieves multiple objectives related to economic development, job creation, cost savings, and environmental sustainability.



2015 Illinois Commodity/ Waste Generation and Characterization Study Update

Composting is vital to implement because it provides many benefits to **people**, the **environment** and our **economy**. Many Illinois municipalities provide compost hauling services to residents due to yard waste being banned from landfills in Illinois since 1990. With almost 30% of our garbage being organics (yard waste and food scraps), there is significant opportunity to compost food scraps. In many cases, this will make a significant difference in waste diversion while not adding any additional hauling cost for either the municipality or the residents.

## Options for residential composting:



Seasonal Residential Ride-Along With Yard Waste



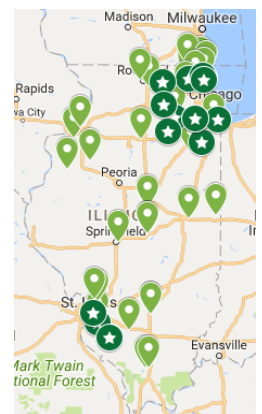
Residential Year Round Compost (3rd Bin)



Bucket Exchange (Supplement to Seasonal Ride-Along)



Drop Off Events



Municipal Drop Off

# Why compost food scraps?

*Demand for green programs is growing, so improving municipal sustainability and cost savings may also build residents' support for current governance and attract prospective residents to the area.*

As of 2018, Illinois ranked **#4** in the country for municipalities offering food scrap composting.\*

## WATER

Fertilizer runoff is creating "dead zones" in our bodies of water while storm water runoff is causing flooding. Compost reduces the need for fertilizers and increases filtration and permeability of heavy soils, mitigating erosion and runoff.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Practice stewardship of water resources; (2) Optimize the use of natural and built systems to manage stormwater.

## ECOSYSTEMS

Urban development is hurting our ecosystems and natural resources.

Composting combats this by improving soil texture and soil's ability to retain nutrients, air and water.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Conserve, restore and enhance natural features and ecosystems; (2) Sustain beautiful landscapes that provide ecosystem services

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Municipalities are increasing their carbon footprints due to methane produced by landfills. The type of decomposition found in compost produces significantly less methane than that occurring in landfills.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## ENERGY

There is currently still a lack of a robust market in renewable energy. Diverting organics from landfills supplies anaerobic digestion operations with materials for renewable energy sources.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Advance renewable energy; (2) Engage the community in clean energy practices

## ECONOMY

Recent studies found that on a per-ton basis, composting sustains two to four times the number of jobs than landfill or incinerators. Composting is a local, place-based industry that creates more jobs and has great potential for local economies.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Cultivate local and sustainable development, jobs, and businesses.

## WASTE

Organic material is wasted when disposed of in landfills and decreases the life expectancy and capacity of landfills by taking up space. Composting diverts 20% of materials, recovers valuable nutrients, and increases the capacity and longevity of landfills.

**GRC GOALS MET:** (1) Divert waste from landfills; (2) Engage the community in waste reduction and recycling.



Created by Seven Generations Ahead and The Illinois Food Scrap Coalition with funding provided by Food:Land:Opportunity, a collaboration between Kinship Foundation and The Chicago Community Trust and funded through the Searle Funds at The Chicago Community Trust.



**Food:Land:Opportunity**  
Localizing the Chicago Foodshed