



# News Release

April 28, 2015  
Release Number: 3901

## County Recognizes International Compost Awareness Week, May 3-9

*Tour the County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility on Tuesday, May 5 starting at 2 p.m.*

[Charleston County Government](#) will recognize [International Compost Awareness Week](#) May 3-9. The awareness week is an initiative by the compost industry throughout the U.S. to promote the environmental benefits of composting. During awareness week and any time the facility is open, compost is available for purchase at the [County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility](#).

To celebrate International Compost Awareness Week, the County is offering a free tour to the public of the Bees Ferry Compost Facility on Tuesday, May 5 at 2 p.m. Please call the Recycling Center at (843) 720-7111 in advance for more information or to sign up for the tour.

"We encourage folks to tour the County's compost facility to learn about composting and how it benefits our community," said Harvey Gibson, Charleston County's Composting Manager.

### Successful steps:

- Since 2009, Charleston County has been recovering 100% of incoming yard waste to produce compost rather than landfilling the material.
- Since November 2011, Charleston County has banned the disposal of yard waste in plastic bags. The ban has eliminated the presence of plastic contaminants and has enhanced the overall quality of the compost produced at the Bees Ferry Compost Facility.
- Charleston County was the first program in the state to initiate food waste composting with a pilot in 2010. Since then, more than 9,000 tons of food waste has been diverted from the landfill.
- In January 2015, Charleston County's Composting Program was presented with the [U.S. Composting Council's](#) "2014 Composting Program of the Year" award. This award represents how Charleston County is making strides to become the premier solid waste program in the southeast.
- Since 2014, the program has donated more than 450 tons of compost to local schools and community organizations.



### The County encourages residents to start composting and provides these tips on how to do so:

- Composting at home:
  - [Charleston County's Environmental Management Department](#) provides backyard compost workshops, presentations and tours of the [Bees Ferry Compost Facility](#).
  - Compost workshops include how to start [composting at home](#), how to maintain a compost pile, worm composting and how to use finished compost.
  - Compost presentations for homeowner's associations, garden clubs and other groups are available upon request (contact the Charleston County's Environmental Management Department at (843) 720-7111 or visit: [recycle.charlestoncounty.org](http://recycle.charlestoncounty.org)).
- Composting at work:
  - In 2012, the [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\)](#) granted [Charleston County](#) a permit to process commercial food waste at the Bees Ferry Compost Facility, which made the County's 2010 Food Waste Composting Pilot a permanent program.
  - The [County's Commercial Food Waste Composting Program](#) is the first of its kind approved by DHEC in the state.

- Local restaurants and large food waste generators, such as grocery stores, utilize private food waste haulers, who deliver the material for a fee to the Bees Ferry Compost Facility.
- Increasing the intake of food waste tonnage supports the County's 40% goal and allows the County's Environmental Management Department to help reduce the costs of operating its compost programs.
- For a video on how to collect food scraps for composting in a commercial kitchen, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuuxpB4EJ60>.
- **Composting at play:**
  - Three [Charleston County Park & Recreation Commission](#) (CCPRC) water parks are recovering food waste and serving ware that is hauled to the Bees Ferry Compost Facility. A portion of the end-product, which is compost or "black gold" (a nutrient-rich soil additive), will be utilized by CCPRC parks around the County for landscaping and beautification. The effort to divert organic waste at the water parks is the result of Charleston County Government and CCPRC partnering to create a comprehensive recreational recycling program for the County parks.
  - As part of the Greening Schools Program, Charleston County Government and the [Charleston County School District](#) initiated a food waste recovery program in four elementary schools last school year. The program has grown to include 46 elementary and middle schools. More than 300 tons of food waste material has been diverted from the landfill since the school year began.

Charleston County sells premium compost for residential and commercial use for:

- \$10 per ton
- \$5 per cubic yard
- \$2 per bag (1.5 cubic feet)
- Bring your own 5-gallon bucket to the Bees Ferry Compost Facility and staff will fill it with compost for only \$0.25 per bucket.

Compost can be purchased at:

**Bees Ferry Compost Facility**

1344 Bees Ferry Road, Charleston (West Ashley)  
 Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.  
 Saturday 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
 Cash or check accepted.

**Charleston County Recycling Center**

13 Romney Street, Charleston (Downtown)  
 Monday - Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
 Cash or check accepted. Bag sales only.

For more information, contact the [Charleston County's Environmental Management Department](#) at (843) 720-7111 or visit: [www.recycle.charlestoncounty.org](http://www.recycle.charlestoncounty.org).

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