

News Release



May 5, 2014
Release Number: 3764

County Recognizes International Compost Awareness Week, May 5-11

Purchase compost for \$2/bag or \$10/ton at the Bees Ferry Compost Facility

[Charleston County Government](#) will recognize [International Compost Awareness Week](#) May 5-11. 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](#) for \$2 per bag (1.5 cubic feet) or \$10 per loose ton.

"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 Superintendent.

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.
- In 2011, the [County's Environmental Management Department](#) received the [Carolina Recycling Association's](#) Outstanding Composting or Organics Recycling Program Award, which recognized the County's compost facility for its design and implementation of an organics-recycling program (*news release on the award: <http://charlestoncounty.org/News/archives/2011/3258.htm>*).

"Producing compost that is free of plastic contaminants allows farmers, landscapers and residents the ability to purchase a higher quality product," Gibson said.

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).
- 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 31 elementary and middle schools. Over 300 tons of food waste material has been diverted from the landfill since the school year began.

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

For information on Charleston County Government news and services, the public can:

- Visit our website: www.charlestoncounty.org
- Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ChasCountyGov>
- Like us on Facebook (main County site): <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753>
 - *Board of Elections and Voter Registration:* <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Board-of-Elections-and-Voter-Registration/103895809694986>
 - *Consolidated 9-1-1 Center's Public Education Program:* <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Consolidated-9-1-1-Center-Public-Education-Program/186965438015227>
 - *Economic Development:* <https://www.facebook.com/CharlestonCountyED>
 - *Emergency Management Department:* <http://www.facebook.com/EMDChasCo>
 - *Awendaw District Fire Department:* <http://www.facebook.com/EMDChasCohttps://www.facebook.com/pages/Awendaw-District-Fire-Department/505429932850932>
 - *Zoning and Planning Department:* <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Zoning-Planning-Department/549596221765813>
 - *Sheriff's Office:* <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Sheriffs-Office/557956290949818>
- See us on You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/charlestoncountygov>
- Watch County Council meetings online <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/charleston-county-government>



- written by Jennie Flinn -