

Better at the Bin



Recology Sunset Scavenger and Recology Golden Gate, your local recycling companies | Recycle | Compost

April–June 2023



Composting helps protect farms from erosion

Spring arrived in full form, fueled by recent rains and much-welcomed sunshine. And local farms, which struggled with drought before the rainstorms, are now experiencing vigorous growth.

Farmers say every year presents different challenges. City residents and businesses can help by participating in San Francisco's curbside composting collection program.

The high-quality compost made from the food scraps, sticks, and leaves put in curbside composting bins is a natural sponge that attracts and retains water. Applying compost helps farms keep crops growing during dry years.

And local farms use compost to grow

cover crops like mustard that help hold topsoil in place during heavy rainstorms. That technique aids farms in retaining their most precious resource — the 14 inches of nutrient-rich topsoil that grows our food.

Johnnie White, operations manager for Pina Vineyard Management in Oakville, California, oversees 68 vineyards, including more than 1,000 acres of grapes.

"We are trying to help build up the soil, increase the micro-nutrients, and improve soil structure," White said. "It's huge for us. On these hillsides, we have to grow cover crops to prevent soil erosion that could otherwise end up in the SF Bay."

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Agriculture contributes \$50 billion annually to California's economy, but it only works if we help our farms maintain healthy soils. So, please, when discarding materials, place all food scraps, sticks, and leaves in your green curbside composting bin.

Every time we compost at the curb, we help provide the feedstock needed to make nutrient-rich compost local farms use to retain and nurture topsoil. That helps grow the healthy fruits and vegetables that feed our families. And that supports food security, which ultimately benefits all. ■

INSPIRING OTHERS

LOOK WHAT YOU STARTED!

The two largest cities in America — Los Angeles and New York — recently announced they are implementing curbside food scrap collection for composting.

That's a lot of potential in the quest to keep compostable materials out of landfills and incinerators.

"It's about time," shouted a shopper hearing the news at the Alemany Farmer's Market, where growers love to learn that more cities are participating in curbside composting programs.

San Francisco pioneered curbside food scrap collection for composting in North America in 1996. City dwellers and businesses have kept more than 2 million tons of compostable material out of landfills and instead sent their food scraps to local farms as finished compost.

In the last five years, more than 200 cities have followed San Francisco's lead. Together, we are changing the way the world



does garbage. Now we place our food scraps together with sticks and leaves in green bins placed at the curb for collection by Recology.

Sandra Goldmark, director of sustainability at Barnard College in NYC, said she is "thrilled" by the mayor's commitment and hopes curbside collection for composting becomes mandatory for all properties.

"It's actually so much better in your home — there's no big, giant trash bag with smelly, gnarly stuff," Goldmark told the New York Times. "You put wet food scraps in a separate container, and it makes all of your trash less gross." ■



Our customer service staff is here to help. Email us at CustomerService@RecologySF.com

Recycling paper, cardboard saves millions of trees



Giant cypress, San Francisco Botanical Garden

Trees bring us great pleasure. They provide welcomed shade on sunny days. Trees add beauty and character to our neighborhoods, parks, and open spaces. And they are the definition of biodiversity. More than 60,000 species of trees exist on earth. Trees produce oxygen and help clean the air we breathe. They return carbon

to the soil and protect against soil erosion. They attract and shelter birds, bees, and other critters. Trees feed us. Without them, we wouldn't have most fruits and nuts. For all these reasons and more, we are encouraged to recycle all paper and cardboard when discarding materials. Most San Franciscans dutifully recycle paper in the blue curbside bins provided

by Recology. In this way, we help save millions of trees.

But we also miss opportunities. Studies show paper and cardboard make up 17 percent of the material we toss in our landfill bins.

Manufacturers need high-quality bales of recycled paper and cardboard to make new products such as cereal and pasta boxes and new cardboard boxes. To save trees from being cut down to feed paper mills, it's important to **recycle all paper and cardboard.**

So that we can all continue enjoying the many benefits trees provide, please place used envelopes, postcards, note paper, cereal and pasta boxes, cardboard, and other paper appropriate for recycling in your blue bin.

Recology will collect, sort, bale, and ship all recycled paper to mills to be made into new products. Recycling paper also saves energy and water and reduces the environmental impacts and pollution created by extracting virgin materials. And recycling generates far more jobs than landfilling.

Our collective efforts to recycle save forests of trees, and every effort to keep recycling, no matter how small, matters. Favor trees, fellow recyclers, they could be our greatest asset. ■

PLEASE REMEMBER: Empty and loose

Shoppers help reduce plastic pollution when they buy beverages and food items in glass bottles and jars and then recycle them.

When recycling glass containers, please empty liquids from bottles and rinse jars before tossing them into your blue bin.

These simple steps help keep recycled paper and recycled cardboard clean and dry. That is important because paper mills will no longer buy bales of recycled paper containing wet or food-stained paper.

Help keep San Francisco's recycled paper moving. Empty all glass bottles and jars and toss them loose in your recycling bin. **Do not place recycling in plastic bags. Think "empty and loose."**

Thank you for keeping these important tips in mind when recycling. Your efforts help keep recyclable materials out of landfills, save energy and other resources, and support green jobs and the supply chain. ■



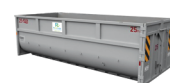
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