

# REC Organics Recycling Calendar Topics for Statewide Education plan for 2024

## Main Themes

= Primary

= Secondary



NO SHREDDED PAPER



NO GLASS



NO PLASTIC-COATED PAPER



NO CONDIMENT PACKETS



NO DIAPERS

[Access all resources linked in this document via Drop Box.](#)

### January

#### Christmas Trees & Wreaths

- Remove wires, lights, and decorations.

### February

#### Sneaky Contaminants

- Anything plastic! Look out for candy wrappers, produce stickers, twist ties, straws, plastic labels, packaged foods, fast food packaging, packaging not labeled with BPI label, or any traditionally accepted recycling items.

### March

#### What are Organics and What is Accepted?

- Focus on food scraps – composting's bread and butter.
- Uncoated, non-recyclable paper (think paper napkins, facial tissue, and paper towels.
- BPI or bust – Compostable foodservice products must be certified by BPI.

#### How to start: Where do I bring organics?

- Share your city specific website and resources for curbside collection and/or drop-sites.
- [Findacomposter.com](http://Findacomposter.com)

#### Cut Flowers

- Remove ribbons, rubber bands, plastic sleeves, packets of floral food, or any other non-vegetative materials.

#### Buy BPI

- Look for BPI Logo when buying compostable products. [Utilize BPI logo asset in the DropBox.](#)

### April

#### Spring Cleaning

- No floor sweepings/vacuum contents or dryer lint due to the presence of non-organic micro plastics in the material.
- Deep freezer cleaning – no boxes and bags!
- No paper towels or napkins soaked in chemical cleaners.

### May

#### International Compost Awareness Week

- Host or attend a Spring Plate-to-Garden event.
- Purchase compost for your yard/garden to continue the cycle.
- Share backyard composting tips.

### June

#### Event organics recycling and zero waste events

- Do not mix disposable, reusable, recyclable, and compostable products. It creates confusion.
- Contact vendors ahead of time and require they use compostable, BPI certified products at your event. Or provide the products for the vendors to be sure they have the correct products.
- Properly label collection bins (color coding with images).
- Recruit volunteers to monitor bins.

#### Benefits of Compost for Soil

- Water retention, organic matter, nutrient content, less irrigation and fertilizers.
- Buy compost from [STA vendors](#) to prevent the spread of invasive plants and pests.
- Feedstocks: You get out what you put in.

#### Watch for Imposters

- Fool me twice, shame on me! Watch out for claims such as: Made from plants, bio/oxo/marine degradable, sustainably managed and sourced, etc.
- Compostable products must have the BPI certification label to be accepted at MN compost facilities.
- Define different between "compostable" and "biodegradable".

#### Buy in Bulk

- Composting is great but avoiding wasted food in the first place is better. Buying in bulk helps reduce wasted food because you can buy just what you need!
- Individual condiment packets and chip bags cost more and increases chances of contamination.

# REC Organics Recycling Calendar Topics for Statewide Education plan for 2024 (cont.)

July	August	September
<p><b><u>PFAS and Micro-plastics</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fast-food wrappers and molded fiber products may contain PFAS.</li> <li>Micro-plastics from plastic-coated paper.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Environmental Benefits of Organics Recycling</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Saves space in landfills.</li> <li>Reduces greenhouse gas emissions.</li> <li>Creates an environmentally beneficial commodity out of a waste product.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>School organics collection</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage reusable trays over compostable trays and compostable trays over Styrofoam.</li> <li>Milk cartons are not compostable.</li> <li>Bin monitoring reduces likelihood of contamination.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Traditional recycling is not organics recycling</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If it goes into your single sort recycling, never place it in your organics recycling. Single stream recycling items include: metal containers, plastic (#1, #2, #5), glass bottles, paper, cardboard, cans and containers.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Pet Waste, Bedding, and Litter</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put it where it belongs: in the trash!</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Troubleshooting Tips for Organics Recycling</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counter/small floor organics bin options and maintenance.</li> <li>Utilize BPI certified compostable bags to help prevent odors and make material easier for your hauler to collect.</li> <li>Fruit fly prevention.</li> <li>Odor prevention – keep it cool and dry, or even freeze it!</li> </ul>
October	November	December
<p><b><u>What to do with leaves?</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yard waste and organics can't mix in your cart or at drop sites.</li> <li>Composters like to use their own "recipe".</li> <li>Takes up valuable capacity (if any organics is mixed with yard waste, it all must be managed as organics).</li> <li><a href="http://Findacomposter.com">Findacomposter.com</a></li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Preventing food waste over the holidays</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the Guestimator tool for meal planning at your gatherings at: <a href="http://SavetheFood.com">SavetheFood.com</a>.</li> <li>No cooking oil (trace amounts ok).</li> <li>Encourage guests to bring reusable containers to bring home leftovers.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Recycling organics year round</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Food scraps are created year-round.</li> <li>Composting doesn't stop in the winter, so keep diverting those food scraps!</li> <li>Microbial action makes composting work and keeps the piles hot all winter long. Let's give the microbes some love!</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Pumpkins/Jack-O-Lanterns</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove all decorations that are not organic prior to disposal.</li> <li>Host a pumpkin collection in your community so residents don't throw them in the trash.</li> <li>May be handled as food waste or as yard waste. Check with your local recycling resource on best outlet.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Invasive Plants and Insects</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invasive pests such as Emerald Ash Borer, Jumping Worms, and others can be eliminated with proper composting methods and best practices.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Clothing, Fabric or Textiles</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't place in the organics please!</li> <li>Reuse, re-purpose, refurbish or return to a textile recycler (not in the recycling or organics bin though!)</li> </ul>

- **Primary** - Messaging that should take priority for that month.
- **Secondary** - Messaging that could be run in addition to the primary messaging for that month.
- [Refer to 2024 Recycling Calendar for monthly messaging related to recycling.](#)
- [Share your organization's images and messages that others may use on DropBox.](#)
- [Request access to REC DropBox by emailing Jon Klapperich at \[jklapperich@mnchamber.com\]\(mailto:jklapperich@mnchamber.com\).](#)