

# Organics Recycling Outreach Guide

Terminology to use when educating residents and businesses.

This document is reviewed annually.

Last review: May 2017

The most up-to-date version of this document can be found on the  
Recycling Association of Minnesota's webpage ([recycleminnesota.org](http://recycleminnesota.org)).

This document is meant to be a guiding document to be used voluntarily by waste educators both public and private statewide. The subcommittee of the Association of Recycling Managers created this document. The following organizations were represented on the committee at the time of the Guide's creation:

- Anoka County—Sue Doll
- Carver County—Leslie Wilson
- City of Columbia Heights—Jesse Davies
- City of Minneapolis—Kellie Kish
- City of Shorewood—Julie Moore
- City of St. Louis Park—Kala Fisher
- Communications Team of the Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board—Yeamah Brewer, Jenny Kedward, Alisa Reckinger, Leslie Wilson
- Dakota County—Jenny Kedward
- Hennepin County—John Jaimez, Alisa Reckinger
- Minnesota Composting Council—Tim Farnan, Kellie Kish
- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency—Tim Farnan, Emily Barker
- Ramsey County—Jean Buckley
- Recycling Association of Minnesota—Maggie Mattacola
- SET/The Mulch Store—Rob Friend

The document is supported or reviewed by representatives from the following organizations:

- Association of Recycling Managers
- City of Champlin
- City of Hopkins
- City of Roseville
- City of St. Louis Park
- City of West St. Paul
- CreekSide Soils (Hutchinson)
- Dakota County
- Dakota Roots SMSC Organics Recycling Facility
- Dakota Valley Recycling (Cities of Apple Valley, Burnsville, Eagan)
- Full Circle Organics (Good Thunder, St. Cloud, Kasson Facilities accept SSO)
- Minnesota Composting Council
- SET/The Mulch Store (Rosemount, MN)
- Solid Waste Management Coordinating Board Communications Team
- Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (Duluth)

# Organics Recycling Terminology

**Goal:** To create a style guide used statewide for printed and verbal communication with consistent terminology, symbols, and color.

## Program terminology

Overall program term: Organics Recycling

- Used as the title of a specific program or a title of the document: capitalize both words
- Used as a general term: lowercase both words
- If space permits, use Organics Recycling. If space is limited (e.g. signage) simply use Organics.
- Avoid using the terms compost/composting
- Avoid using the term waste/wasted
- Promotional campaigns may use different tag-line to lead audience to program content/intent.

**Symbol/Logos:** at this time – avoid including a symbol (including the recycling symbol) in association with organics recycling)

- Avoid using the recycling symbol to prevent organics being placed in a recycling cart.
- Regional team will be evaluating a symbol to use in the future
- Use the BPI (Biodegradable Products Institute) and/or Cedar Grove logos, when educating residents and businesses on compostable products. These agencies certify compostable products.



**COMPOSTABLE**  
IN INDUSTRIAL FACILITIES  
Check locally, as these do not exist in many communities. Not suitable for backyard composting. CERT # S-A-M-P-L-E



## Usage

The use of these terms is completely voluntary and is meant for public education. Examples of educational materials in which this guide might be used include:

- Brochures and print materials
- Website content
- One-on-one education (phone, in person, email)
- Interviews for print or recorded media events
- Videos
- PSA (paid or free media – billboards, press releases, etc.)
- Social Media
- Media campaign (includes one or more from the above)

## Signage considerations

Title: Use “Organics for (insert program type here)”

For example, Organics for composting, Organics for food to animals, etc.)

## Color

Use the following colors for signs and other major documents:

- CMYK Green 56.0.100.27
- PMS 370

---

## Organics Recycling Program Types

Use the following terms when explaining a program:

- Large-scale / industrial compost facility/site
- Backyard composting
- Small-scale / community compost site (not backyard)
- Food to People OR Food Rescue (promote to businesses only)
- Food to Animals (Regulated through MN Board of Animal Health)
- Food to Animal Feed (promote to businesses only)

For future consideration:

- Organics for Anaerobic Digestion (wet system)
- Organics for Anaerobic Digestion (dry system)

---

## Layout for detailed descriptions

### Outline

When describing the program, use sub-category and terms below – modifying for space allotments.

### *Material Category*

- Choices for category title

### *Acceptable and non-acceptable materials for category*

- Use these terms when explaining what items are or are not accepted in category

## Organics Recycling for Composting

### Large-scale / industrial compost facility/site

#### Material Category: Food

(choose one or more from below for a title or sub-category):

- Food
- All Food
- Food Scraps

Sub-descriptors under Food category include:

*Check with your facility before using food lists terms in educational materials.*

Accepted	Not Accepted (small amounts are accepted)	Maybe (depends on program/facility)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Produce OR Fruits and vegetables<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Peelings, pits and shells</li></ul></li><li>• Meat, fish and bones<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Bones, scales and shells</li></ul></li><li>• Dairy products<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Yogurt and cheese</li></ul></li><li>• Eggs and eggshells</li><li>• Bakery and dry goods<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Pasta, beans and rice</li><li>◦ Bread and cereal</li><li>◦ Nuts and shells</li><li>◦ Dough</li></ul></li><li>• Pet food</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grease or oil</li><li>• Chewing gum</li><li>• Stickers on produce</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liquids*</li></ul>

\*Full Circle Organics can handle larger amounts of liquids. Other facilities cannot.

#### Material Category: Paper (choose one or more from below for a title or sub-category):

- Paper
- Soiled paper
- Soiled paper goods
- Food-soiled paper
- Non-recyclable paper products/goods

Sub-descriptors under Paper category include:

*Check with your facility before using paper lists terms in educational materials.*

Accepted	Not Accepted	Maybe (depends on program/facility)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Napkins, paper towels and tissues</li><li>• Paper egg cartons</li><li>• Shredded paper</li><li>• Certified compostable plates,</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paper that can be recycled</li><li>• Cartons (milk cartons, juice boxes, soup, broth and wine cartons)</li><li>• Paper products (plates, boats,</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pizza boxes from delivery**</li><li>• Paper towels and tissues from bathrooms**</li></ul>

## Large-scale/Industrial Composting (Continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bowls and containers*</li> <li>Certified compostable cups (hot and cold)*</li> <li>Paper bags (recycle if not soiled)</li> <li>Parchment and wax paper*</li> <li>Tissue paper</li> <li>Paper towel and toilet paper rolls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bowls) without BPI or Cedar Grove certification</li> <li>Take-out cups (hot and cold) without BPI or Cedar Grove certification</li> <li>Refrigerated and frozen food boxes</li> <li>Fast food wrappers</li> <li>Butcher paper/wrap</li> <li>Microwave popcorn bags</li> <li>Ice cream tubs</li> <li>Chinese take-out food containers</li> <li>Products labeled "biodegradable"</li> <li>Paper coated with foil</li> <li>Wax/produce cardboard boxes</li> <li>Wrapping paper</li> </ul>	
---	---	--

\*Must have BPI or Cedar Grove logo on product or product container.

\*\*Western Lake Superior Sanitary District (WLSSD) does not accept these items but Metro Area facilities do.

### Material Category: Other Compostable/Household Items (choose one or more from below):

- Other compostable items
- Other household items

Sub-descriptors under Other Compostable/Household Items category include:

*Check with your facility before using other compostable/household items lists terms in educational materials.*

Accepted	Not Accepted	Maybe (depends on program/facility)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffee grounds and filters</li> <li>Tea bags</li> <li>Houseplant trimmings</li> <li>Wood chopsticks, popsicle sticks and toothpicks</li> <li>Certified-compostable plastic products*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cups, plates and bowls</li> <li>Utensils and straws</li> <li>Bags</li> <li>Containers</li> </ul> </li> <li>Hair and nail clippings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recyclable materials (glass, plastic, paper, metal)</li> <li>Plastic</li> <li>Animal waste and litter</li> <li>Diapers and sanitary products</li> <li>Microwave popcorn bags</li> <li>Dryer sheets</li> <li>Dryer lint</li> <li>Dental floss</li> <li>Cleaning or baby wipes</li> <li>Cigarettes</li> <li>Fireplace or BBQ ashes</li> <li>Charcoal</li> <li> Rocks, soil and dirt</li> <li>Latex products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Yard waste</li> <li>Bamboo products</li> <li>Cotton balls and paper swabs</li> <li>Animal bedding</li> </ul>

### *Large-scale/Industrial Composting (Continued)*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Gloves, balloons</li><li>● Vacuum cleaner bags and contents</li><li>● Black Walnut Shells</li><li>● Products labeled as "biodegradable"</li></ul>	
--	---	--

\*Must have BPI or Cedar Grove logo on product or product container.

## **Backyard Composting & Small-Scale/Community Compost Site**

Review local unit of government regulations on backyard composting and small-scale/community compost site composting. Information provided below is general for an average backyard composter or small-scale /community composter who does some management of their backyard or small-scale compost pile. People or communities who have larger compost piles and/or more actively manage (water, aerate) their pile can compost a larger variety of materials.

### **Material Category: Food**

Sub-descriptors under Food category include:

<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Not Accepted</b>	<b>Maybe</b> (depends on backyard composting skill level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Produce OR Fruits and vegetables<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Peelings and shells</li></ul></li><li>● Bakery and dry goods<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Pasta, beans and rice</li><li>○ Bread and cereal</li></ul></li><li>● Pet food</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Meat, fish and bones<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Bones, scales and shells</li></ul></li><li>● Dairy products<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Yogurt and cheese</li></ul></li><li>● Eggs</li><li>● Raw or cooked food with oil, grease, or dairy</li><li>● Fats, oils, or grease</li><li>● Chewing gum</li><li>● Stickers on produce</li><li>● Liquids</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Cooked meat scraps</li><li>● Rinsed eggshells</li><li>● Fruit pits</li><li>● Nuts and shells</li><li>● Dough</li></ul>

### **Material Category: Paper**

Sub-descriptors under Paper category include:

<b>Accepted</b>	<b>Not Accepted</b>	<b>Maybe</b> (depends on backyard composting skill level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Napkins, paper towels and tissues</li><li>● Paper egg cartons</li><li>● Shredded paper (no metal or plastic)</li><li>● Paper bags (recycle if not soiled)</li><li>● Tissue paper</li><li>● Paper towel and toilet paper rolls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● All "not accepted" items in Large-Scale/Industrial Composting</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Certified compostable plates, bowls and containers*</li><li>● Certified compostable take-out cups*</li><li>● Pizza boxes from delivery</li><li>● Parchment and wax paper</li></ul>

## Backyard Composting & Small-Scale/Community Compost Site (Continued)

• Paper towels and tissues from bathrooms		
---	--	--

\*Must have BPI or Cedar Grove logo on product or product container.

### Material Category: Yard Waste

Sub-descriptors under Yard Waste category include:

Accepted	Not Accepted	Maybe (depends on backyard composting skill level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leaves</li> <li>Grass clippings</li> <li>Twigs and pinecones</li> <li>Woodchips</li> <li>Houseplant or garden plants and trimmings</li> <li>Straw</li> <li>Sawdust (untreated wood only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treated wood</li> <li>Sawdust (treated wood)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weeds gone to seed</li> <li>Noxious weeds</li> <li>Diseased plant material</li> </ul>

### Material Category: Other Compostable/Household Items

Sub-descriptors under Other Compostable/Household Items category include:

Accepted	Not Accepted	Maybe (depends on backyard composting skill level)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffee grounds and filters</li> <li>Tea bags (no metal)</li> <li>Cotton balls and paper swabs</li> <li>Hair and nail clippings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All “not accepted” items in Large-Scale/Industrial Composting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bamboo products</li> <li>Wood chopsticks, popsicle sticks and toothpicks</li> <li>Certified-compostable plastic products*: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cups, plates and bowls</li> <li>Utensils and straws</li> <li>Bags</li> <li>Containers</li> </ul> </li> <li>Animal bedding</li> </ul>

\*Must have BPI or Cedar Grove logo on product or product container.

## Organics for Food to Animals

Local companies: Barthold Farms and Second Harvest Farms

Material Category: **Food** (choose one or more from below for a title or sub-category):

- Food
- All Food
- Food Scraps

Sub-descriptors under Food category include:

*Check with your facility before using terms in educational materials.*

Accepted	Not Accepted	Maybe (depends on program)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Produce OR Fruits and vegetables<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Peelings, pits and shells</li></ul></li><li>• Dairy products<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Yogurt and cheese</li></ul></li><li>• Eggs and eggshells</li><li>• Bakery and dry goods<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Pasta, beans and rice</li><li>◦ Bread and cereal</li><li>◦ Nuts and shells</li></ul></li><li>• Pet food</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-food items</li><li>• Liquids</li><li>• Grease or oil</li><li>• Gum</li><li>• Animal waste, litter and bedding</li><li>• Plants and yard waste</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meat, Fish &amp; Bones<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Bones, scales and shells</li></ul></li><li>• Coffee grounds, filters &amp; tea bags</li></ul>

---

## Organics for Food to Animal Feed

Local companies: Endres Processing and ReConserve of Minnesota

Material Category: **Food**

Bakery and cereal grain by-products only

Accepted from industrial bakeries only

*Check with your facility before using terms in educational materials.*

Accepted	Not Accepted
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bakery and cereal grain by-products</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meat, Fish, Bones</li><li>• Produce OR Fruits and vegetables</li><li>• Dairy products</li><li>• Eggs and eggshells</li><li>• Non-food items</li><li>• Liquids</li><li>• Grease or oil</li><li>• Animal waste, litter and bedding</li><li>• Plants and yard waste</li></ul>

