

# News Release



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## Charleston County Wins Award for Composter of the Year

*U.S. Composting Council Recognizes the County's Compost Program*

[Charleston County Environmental Management](#) has been named the 2014 Composter of the Year by the [U.S. Composting Council](#) (USCC), the national trade association for compost manufacturers. The award was presented at a ceremony during the USCC's national conference in Austin, Texas on Jan. 22, 2015.

The Composter of the Year award is presented to a commercial-scale composting facility, public or private, which has displayed excellence in compost production, marketing and distribution. Charleston County was selected for its role as a leader within the compost manufacturing industry, regionally and nationally.

"We are very proud to have been named the 2014 Composter of the Year. This award is the result of the combined support of County Council and the hard work and dedication set forth by Environmental Management," said Charleston County Councilwoman and Solid Waste Committee Chair Colleen Condon. "We are thrilled to be recognized for what we have accomplished thus far and will continue to be a leader in the Southeast."



Charleston County has a 40% recycling goal, which was adopted by Charleston County Council following a comprehensive assessment of the County's integrated solid waste management program in 2009. As part of Charleston County Council's efforts to set a vision for a new Green Plan, one strategy included maximizing the County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility, which ultimately resulted in overhauling the County's compost program.

Charleston County began composting yard waste in 1993 and averaged about 20,000 tons per year. Under the direction of Harvey Gibson, Compost Operations Manager, the Bees Ferry Compost Facility currently occupies 28 acres, employs 18 people and processes 100% of the yard waste generated and accepted at the landfill, nearly 60,000 tons a year. In 2011, the County implemented a yard waste plastic bag ban to improve the quality of the finished compost product by eliminating the presence of plastic contaminants. Creating a cleaner compost product allows farmers, landscapers and retailers the ability to purchase higher quality compost. Additionally, the County was the first in the state to initiate food waste composting and remains the only compost facility permitted to process commercial food waste in South Carolina.

Charleston County has also formed local partnerships to raise awareness and educate citizens about compost. Examples include:

- Partnering with local haulers who collect food waste from participating restaurants, hotels, hospitals and colleges and deliver to the County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility for processing.
- Partnering with Charleston County School District (CCSD) to collect food waste from school cafeterias and provide education and outreach to CCSD teachers, students and custodians.
- Partnering with local school districts to form the Tri-County School Compost Donation Program, allowing schools to close the composting loop by using compost on athletic fields and school gardens.
- Partnering with Charleston County Parks and Recreation Committee (CCPRC) to provide backyard composting workshops.

In January 2013, the County enrolled in the [USCC's Seal of Testing Assurance](#) (STA), which testifies the County's finished compost consistently meets the program's high quality standards. The STA program requires participants to regularly sample and submit their compost for laboratory analysis. These test results are available upon request.

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 on the uses and benefits of compost, visit

<http://www.charlestoncounty.org/departments/environmental-management/compost-facility.php>.

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