



Charleston County News Release

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County Recognizes International Compost Awareness Week May 6-12

Pick up a free bag of compost at the Bees Ferry Compost Facility May 9

[Charleston County Government](#) will recognize [International Compost Awareness Week](#), May 6-12, an initiative by the compost industry throughout the U.S. to promote the environmental benefits of composting.

In honor of *Compost Awareness Week*, the [County's Bees Ferry Compost Facility](#) staff will give out sample bags of compost on Wednesday, May 9 (one bag per person, while supplies last).

Last year, the [County's Environmental Management Department](#) received the [2011 Outstanding Composting or Organics Recycling Program Award](#) during the [Carolina Recycling Association's \(CRA\) 21st Annual Trade Show and Conference](#), which recognized the County's compost facility for its design and implementation of an organics-recycling program.

The County encourages residents to start composting, and provides tips on how to do so at home and at work:

- Composting at home
 - The County provides backyard compost workshops and 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 associations, garden clubs and other organizations are available upon request.
- Composting at work
 - In September 2010, the [S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control \(DHEC\)](#) approved the County's request to implement a Food Waste Composting Pilot Demonstration -- the first food waste composting project approved by DHEC in the state.
 - With a successful demonstration of the pilot program, the County anticipates making food waste composting a permanent program in the near future.
 - Commercial food waste generators may call the Recycling Center at (843) 720-1111 to obtain more information about joining the program. A list of food waste collection partners will be provided or businesses can also find the information online.
 - Increasing the intake of food waste tonnage supports the County's 40% goal and allows the Environmental Management Department to help reduce the costs of operating its compost programs.

"We encourage folks to visit our department's commercial compost facility and learn about the benefits of composting and the possibilities compost can provide to our community," said Harvey Gibson, Charleston County's Composting Superintendent.

Since 2009, 100% of the County's yard waste has been recovered instead of landfilling the material.

"Composting yard waste saves valuable landfill space, results in a product to be used as a daily cover at the landfill, and reduces landfill operating costs," Gibson said.

The recent yard waste [Plastic Bag Disposal Ban at Bees Ferry Landfill](#) that went into effect November 1, 2011, has effectively “closed the loop,” so residents, landscapers and retailers may purchase a high quality compost that is generated, produced and sold locally. To date, the compost facility has observed a 95% reduction in plastic bags received at the landfill, allowing the department to create a higher quality and more marketable product.

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

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