

Start a School Food Scrap Recovery Program

1. Schedule a Free Planning Meeting

OCRRA will help you estimate your food scrap volumes, evaluate your school's waste infrastructure, and determine how much you can reduce your trash. OCRRA also provides guidance on how to best roll out a food scrap recovery program. **Schedule a meeting at (315) 453-2866 or info@ocrra.org.**

2. Contact Your Waste Hauler

Find out who your hauler is and whether food scrap hauling is included in your contract / how many times per week food waste will be picked up. Ask your hauler to recommend a **cost-effective organics transport solution** to OCRRA's Amboy Compost Facility. Self-hauling your food scraps is also an option!

3. Employee & Student Training with OCRRA

OCRRA provides on-site training at no charge. We will meet with your kitchen/food services staff, administrators, teachers and custodial staff to introduce the compost program and goals. **We will provide the school with guidance, decals, and signage, as well as letters to send home to parents.** We can provide teachers with compost curriculum and activities.



Launch your School's Program

Collection Set Up:

- ✓ Gather materials for food scrap collections
 - OCRRA provided posters, cafeteria display boards and decals.
 - 5- gallon buckets or wheeled 65-gallon carts/totes
- ✓ Evaluate the best placement in the cafeteria for the food scrap bins. The food, recycling and trash bins should be next to one another.
- ✓ Determine the best placement outside the building for the food scrap totes. This should be done in coordination with your hauler.

Monitoring:

- Monitor the food separation process each day in the cafeteria.
- At the beginning of the program have a hands-on waste separation monitor for each lunch period.
- Have students help separate the food scraps, whether a specific compost club or assign rotating classes to adopt the food scrap bins.



Common Issues and Remedies

- **Contamination:** The best way to prevent non-compostable items from entering the food scrap bin is by closely monitoring food scrap separation. Have a monitor at the food bin to prevent students and staff from throwing trash or recyclables in the food scrap bin.
- **Lack of compost monitors:** Make monitoring the bins a privilege for students! Provide incentives or make it something only older grades do. Environmental clubs make great food scrap collection monitors. If your school has a community service requirement, students could fulfill their hours through monitoring. The more education your student body receives about composting the less monitoring that will be needed.
- **Hesitation from kitchen/custodial staff:** Food scrap programs requires support from some of the busiest people in school: kitchen and custodial staff. Include them in program planning, listen to their suggestions for improvement, they know how to make it work best!

More Tips:

- Start with kitchen prep food scraps only. Once the kitchen and custodial staff get the hang of separating food scraps from other waste, expand to collecting dining scraps too.
- Begin with the older grades before rolling out to the rest of the school.
- Regularly communicate with OCRRA and your hauler to improve the food scrap recovery program.

