

Important Note: This activity was developed for the original Green Lunchroom Challenge program, a voluntary pledge program for K-12 schools to improve the sustainability of their food service



operations. The project was coordinated by the [Illinois Sustainable Technology Center Technical Assistance Program](#) with funding from US EPA Region 5.

The following page(s) represent the content of this activity as it appeared on the original project web site, complete with available points and instructions for submitting documentation. **The project is no longer funded and as of June 2018 schools may no longer submit activity documentation to earn points and recognition as described.** The activity is presented for your information to guide your organization's sustainability efforts.

If your school or district implements the suggested activity and wishes to share its experiences, please email [Joy Scrogum](#). Your story may be incorporated into a blog post on this web site, the main ISTC site, or shared on social media to foster networking and inspiration among peer institutions.

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Employ a commercial composting service to regularly pick up food waste/scraps

Activity Category: Composting

Activity: Employ a commercial composting service to regularly pick up food waste/scraps

Rationale: According to a [study conducted by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#), close to fifty percent of school waste can be diverted through composting. Not every school has space on its grounds to accommodate the creation of a on-site compost pile, or staff or students interested or able to devote time to on-site composting or vermicomposting efforts. Commercial composting services may be available through your current waste hauler or through an independent compost pick-up service.



Photo by Crystalclear via CC BY-SA 3.0

Activity Description: Send food scraps

from your school or district to a commercial composting facility during the current school year or make plans to do so starting in the next school year. If you have composted your food scraps prior to the Challenge, you may still get credit for continuing to do so during the current school year. If food scrap composting is available through your current waste hauler and your school or district is not currently composting, modify your existing contract to include composting. If your hauler does not offer composting services, you may contract a food scrap pickup service (e.g. [Collective Resource](#), [Healthy Soil Compost](#), etc.; see "Residential vendors" on the [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition Service Providers page](#), as some of these organizations do work with schools as well as private citizens) to pick up food scraps from your school or district and transport them to a licensed composting facility.

Earn Challenge Points (200 points): Submit a copy of a contract for commercial composting services in PDF or Word format, clearly indicating the time period during which the services will be provided. The copy should be emailed to Joy Scrogum at jscrogum@illinois.edu.

Resources:

 [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency: Digging Deep Through School Trash](#)

 [US EPA Food Recovery Hierarchy: Composting](#)

 [Illinois Food Scrap Coalition: Service Providers](#)

 [FindAComposter.com](#)

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