In order for organics recycling programs to be sustainable, the compost manufacturers that turn organics into compost must receive organics without contamination and/or non-compostable materials.

Organic materials collected at businesses, schools, multifamily properties, homes, and drop-off sites are delivered to A1 Organic’s commercial composting facility. There, the materials are mixed with yard waste and processed to become compost, a nutrient-rich soil amendment. Compost is sold for use in landscaping, road construction, garden projects, and many other soil restoration projects.

Receiving organics free of contamination allows local compost manufacturers to consistently produce clean, nutrient-rich compost that people want to purchase and use.

Compost that contains plastic, glass, and other contaminants is very difficult to sell, and can only be used for low-end purposes. The manufacturer sells the material at a loss in many cases, which drives disposal fees higher.

Contamination happens more frequently in the following situations:

- Collecting organics in front-of-house areas. A1 Organics discourages front-of-house collection of organics unless all items are reusable or compostable. Customers and the general public often find it confusing or don’t take the time to properly sort food and food-service packaging.

- Items are available that are not compostable or reusable in employee common areas. For example, items like plastic utensils, individual creamers, and individual ketchup packets in break rooms.

- Enthusiasm and involvement from champions and leaders fade after the program launch. Without continual support, the quality of an organics program can slip.

- Training and reminders are infrequent. When employees are not aware of their recycling options or are not motivated to care about sorting their waste, it can cause waste to be sorted improperly.
WHAT YOU CAN DO TO ELIMINATE CONTAMINATION?

TAKE A MULTILEVEL APPROACH

Simplify your waste stream

Simplify your waste stream by using only reusable or compostable items. For in-house dining, it is best to use reusable dishes, cups, and utensils. If you are using approved compostable products, make sure that all of your serving containers, dishes, utensils, cups, and containers are CMA Certified & BPI Certified compostable. All containers then can go in the organics recycling container.

Assess all items available

Assess all of the items in common areas and break rooms for staff and make sure they are reusable or compostable. As much as possible, eliminate things like non-compostable plastic utensils, plastic straws, stir sticks, packaged condiments, and individual coffee creamers. Offer things like cream and sugar in bulk or in refillable containers.

Simplify what or where you collect it

If you continue to notice contamination issues, consider simplifying what you collect or where you collect it. Food is the most valuable material to collect for organics recycling, so you could switch to collecting food waste only in situations where you have contamination issues. You could also stop collecting organics in challenging areas, like public facing areas.

Make sorting & regular training mandatory

Make regular training on waste sorting mandatory. Offer regular training to cleaning and janitorial staff on how to properly sort waste and use the correct dumpster or compactor for each waste stream. Offer training when on boarding new staff, and require current staff to be trained twice per year.

Place clearly labeled bins together

Place bins for recycling, trash, and organics recycling together. Make sure bins are labeled, that labels are placed properly so they are visible to the users, with additional signage hung on the walls. Make it simple.

Control access to organics containers

Depending on the location of your organics containers, consider controlling access to prevent unwanted dumping. Lock the containers or have smaller capacity containers with individual representatives responsible for the auditing and dumping of specific container.

Have Staff Separators

Provide a staff member to do department audits and provide in-the-moment separation for the customer. This is a next level service for the customer and an in person opportunity to educate the guest.

CONTACT US:
INFO@A1ORGANICS.COM
1.800.776.1644
ACCEP TED

Food Waste is a very valuable material in organics recycling for composting.


Non-food accepted: Coffee Filters, Teabags, Raw Brown Paper (Craft) Bags, Raw Paper Napkins (non-coated) and White Paper Towels, Wooden Chopsticks, Wooden Sticks.

Yard debris accepted: Flowers, Grass Clippings, Houseplants, Leaves, Plant Trimmings, Small Branches (no larger than 4 feet in length and 4 inches in diameter), Weeds, Pine Needles, and Pine Cones.

Compostables accepted: CMA Approved® Products like plastic cups, paper cups, plates, bowls, utensils, & containers.

*Review the APPROVED list at the CMA QR code below.

NOT ACCEPTED

Most important items to keep out of the organics recycling because they cause the biggest contamination issues:

NO Glass

NO Plastic, food stickers, utensils, styrofoam, plastic-coated paper, K-cups, soda cups, trash bags, bottles, applicators

NO Fast food wrappers, condiment packets, creamer packets

NO Non CMA & BPI approved to-go containers & compostable products labeled “biodegradable”

NO Diapers, sanitary products, and cleaning wipes, domesticated pet waste (for example: cat, dog, or rabbits), horse & livestock manure, and/or other carnivore animal waste.

* At the discretion of the receiving location, contaminated loads are subject to rejection.

WHICH COMPOSTABLE PRODUCTS ARE ACCEPTABLE?

CMA® APPROVED & BPI CERTIFIED

Not all compostable products are the same, they must be lab tested & field tested. Purchasing CMA Approved compostables ensures both.