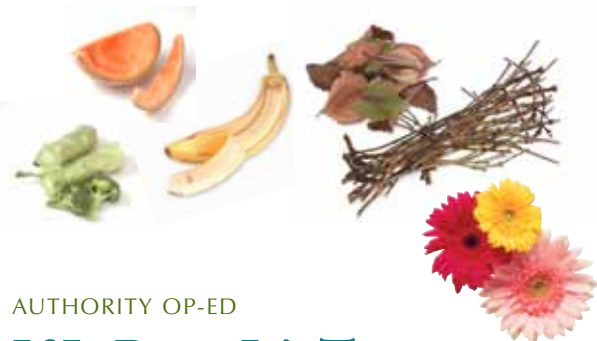




Diversions

—your cutting edge resource for cutting waste.



AUTHORITY OP-ED

If It Rots, It's Too Good to Waste

Not all garbage is created equal. About a third of our trash consists of food scraps and yard trimmings—items that in nature would decompose, or “biodegrade.” However, buried in a landfill with no air or water getting through, this material can’t break down and return nutrients to the soil. Instead, it emits methane, a gas known to contribute to climate change.

Biodegradable material in the landfill causes problems, but solutions are plentiful too. The CCCSWA goes to great lengths to offer you, our residents and businesses, state-of-the-art programs to help our region be as environmentally responsible as possible.

Central Contra Costa residents have been turning their yard trimmings into compost for years, through the curbside green cart program. With Lamorinda residents now adding food scraps, we are churning out even more “black gold.” For home gardeners the CCCSWA offers backyard and worm composting. Our latest endeavor is a commercial pilot program that produces a useful compost-like material and helps generate electricity out of food waste.

Of course, without your participation, these programs are nothing but ideas. We hope you’ll continue to help make each one a big success! Please read on to learn more.



Paul Morsen, *Executive Director*

CCCSWA Scores Eco Award from *diablo*



Diablo Magazine’s April 09 issue honored 20 people, products, places and programs — among them the CCCSWA’s commercial food waste collection program. The theme of this year’s awards was “Celebrating the work of our green heroes.” We are proud that our program received recognition from such a first-rate publication.

RECYCLING FOOD WASTE IS IN SEASON

Local Chefs Feed Local Power Grid

Savoring a fine meal at one of Central Contra Costa’s many excellent restaurants becomes even more satisfying once you realize the food preparation wastes and leftovers are recycled into energy.

Fifty restaurants and grocery stores currently participate in CCCSWA’s food waste recycling pilot program, including Lark Creek, Postino, Massimo’s and Chow. Restaurant staff separates food wastes from other trash, which is then



Executive Chef Roberto Rodriguez of Massimo’s in Walnut Creek collects kitchen scraps for the new pilot program.

collected and sent to the East Bay Municipal Utility District’s wastewater treatment facility in Oakland for “anaerobic digestion.” Anaerobic digestion is a process that creates methane gas, which is used to generate electricity. The process also yields a rich soil amendment.

The program is just part of the regular menu at Massimo’s in Walnut Creek. Executive Chef Roberto Rodriguez was happy to be part of this innovative pilot program. “I’ve worked in San Francisco, where food recycling is the norm. When we heard that the pilot program was available, we signed up right away,” he enthuses. “There’s so much food waste in a restaurant. Why put it in the trash when it can be put to better use?” he adds.

Forty-five more businesses will be added to the pilot this fall. The CCCSWA plans to offer the program to all businesses that generate food waste starting in spring 2010. For more information, call CCCSWA at 925-906-1801.

Fall/Winter Reuse and Cleanup Day Schedule

Community	Date
Unincorp. County	August
Danville	September
Walnut Creek	October
Moraga & Orinda	November
Lafayette	December

More information will be mailed to you two weeks prior to your Reuse and Cleanup Day. If you have questions, please call Allied Waste Services at 925-603-1144.

Let Fallen Leaves Lie

Mulching in winter protects plants from freezing temperatures at night and maintains dormancy on warm days. In the temperate Bay Area, it also keeps weeds in check. But you don't have to spend a cent on store-bought mulch—not when a natural source is literally growing on (and falling off) trees right outside your door. Fall leaves make great mulching



Use fallen leaves for mulching or compost them along with yard trimmings and kitchen scraps.

material, especially for people who don't keep a composting bin in their backyard.

Instead of bagging or recycling fallen leaves in your green cart, shred them with your lawn mower (to encourage faster decomposition) and place them on open soil around your yard or garden. Let the wide variety of nutrients found in the mulch enrich your soil naturally! Making your own mulch will not only save you a few dollars, it's better for the environment, too. Some mulches are made from endangered old-growth cypress trees along the Louisiana coast. (Read more at www.saveourcypress.org.) It's better to "shop locally"—and it doesn't get any more local than your own backyard!

Compost makes great mulching material too. Learn how to make your own from kitchen scraps and yard trimmings through our "Composting for Busy People" program.

We Can Help You Learn to Compost!

CCCSWA's Composting for Busy People program offers free resources:

- **Hands-on workshops** on backyard and worm composting
- **Discounted Biostack bins**, only \$62 (half retail price!)
- **How-to videos**
- **Certification for a \$4.50 discount** on your quarterly garbage bill

For workshop dates and more information please visit www.wastediversion.org/composting.htm or call our hotline at (925) 906-1801 ext. 306

Ask the AUTHORITY

Dear Authority,

Is it better to rinse out food residue before recycling a container, or can I place it in the recycling cart without rinsing? I'd like to save water if possible.

Marilyn in Alamo

Dear Marilyn,

Unlike in the past, rinsing, removing labels and so on is no longer necessary prior to placing containers in your recycling cart, as long as they are only lightly soiled.

If there is more than just residue remaining in a container (a normal amount remaining after using a product), please scrape the remnants out before placing in the recycling cart. If you have food scrap collection at home, this is a great time to use your pail!

Some neighborhoods have lots of furry critters, like raccoons. In these cases, it's probably best to rinse, just to be safe.

Sincerely,

The Authority

Do you have a question for us?
Please send it to authority@wastediversion.org.

Food Scrap Collection Program

According to our fall 2008 survey, almost three out of every five Lamorinda residents participate in the food scrap collection program. Marcia Lassiter of Moraga is one of them.

"I don't even think about it anymore," she declares. "Recycling food scraps has become second nature for me and my family."

The Lassiters collect coffee grounds, stale bread, vegetable trimmings and leftovers in a small container they keep in the kitchen sink. For larger amounts they use the tan-colored, lidded pail they received when the program started. Used napkins and food-soiled paper bags go in too, conveniently



Recycling food scraps has become routine for Marcia Lassiter of Moraga. She collects them in a small container in her sink.

absorbing any excess moisture. Marcia makes sure to keep out any plastics. Every other day or so she empties the container into the large, green curbside cart for yard clippings and food scraps.

At first, Marcia was concerned the new routine might add work, but instead she's found the additional effort to be minimal. "Knowing we're helping the environment more than makes up for it," she reflects.

Lamorinda's food scraps—along with yard trimmings—are turned into compost, a natural fertilizer in high demand among landscapers and farmers. The CCCSWA is currently exploring the idea of expanding the program to other member cities and towns.

Reduce Your Garbage Service and Save!

In this economy, "downsizing" has a scary ring to it—but not when we're talking about your trashcan! If you live in a single-family home, switching from a 64- to a 32-gallon cart will cut your monthly garbage bill in half. Go one step further to a 20-gallon mini-cart and save an additional \$2-\$4, depending on the community. Recycling and yard waste collection is free, so the more you recycle, the more you can save!

Diversions

CCCSWA.....925-906-1801
fax: 925-906-1805.....web: www.wastediversion.org
email: authority@wastediversion.org

GARBAGE:
ALLIED WASTE SERVICES.....925-603-1144
fax: 925-685-8153.....web: www.awsccc.com
For questions concerning billing, special cleanups, vacation hold requests, computer & TV collection, new service or your blue garbage cart.

RECYCLING:
VALLEY WASTE MANAGEMENT.....925-935-8900
fax: 925-935-1617.....web: www.valleywaste.com
For questions concerning the service of your burgundy recycling or green yard clippings carts, to request motor oil recycling containers, for recycling cleanups or information on the Walnut Creek Recycling Center.

CONTRA COSTA RECYCLING HOTLINE ... 1-800-750-4096
HOME COMPOSTING/GRASSCYCLING... 925-906-1801x306
HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE..... 1-800-646-1431

REUSE AND CLEANUP DAYS:
Pacific Rim Recycling..... 1-800-999-6067



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