

Vine Compost Challenge

We are exploring composting as a way to help reduce food waste in landfills, starting with a pilot project in the Vine neighborhood.

What is composting?

Composting is a process that takes organic waste such as food scraps and breaks them down into an organic material called “compost” that can be used as a natural fertilizer.

Benefits of Composting

- When food scraps break down in a landfill they release the potent greenhouse gas methane. Keeping food scraps out of the landfill and converting them to compost instead can help reduce methane emissions.
- Finished compost can be used as a natural fertilizer for soils and gardens, which cuts back on chemical fertilizer usage. Compost helps create healthy soils and increases water retention in soils.
- Food and garden waste can make up over a third of household waste. Both buying food that goes to waste and waste disposal are expensive. By composting at home, you reduce the need to collect, process, treat and dispose of biodegradable materials. This saves landfill space and transportation fuel.

Implementation

This pilot project includes a Composting Survey and a week long compost challenge with a free pick up for Vine residents. This will help us better understand the interest and demand for a food waste collection service in Kalamazoo. This project is part of the City’s overall Sustainability Strategy work and is supported by the Foundation for Excellence.



Project Timeline



AUGUST 17, 2020

Composting Survey Launch
Input on food waste collection



AUG. 27 - SEP. 3, 2020

Vine Compost Challenge Week
Week long compost challenge with free pickup on 9/3



SEPTEMBER 18, 2020

Composting Survey Close
Online survey will close



SEPTEMBER 2020

Review Results
Review amount of food waste collected, # of households that participated, and survey input



Composting Survey

Fill out our composting survey to let us know what you think about food waste collection in Vine.

surveymonkey.com/r/XV9BSPN



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it only 1 week?

Because food waste pick up services are very new to Kalamazoo, there isn't currently capacity to host a pilot project for longer than one week. We are excited to take what we learn from this "micro" pilot project and grow capacity for a longer pilot project next year.

Can composting for only 1 week make a difference?

Keeping food waste out of the landfill, even only for a week, can still make a difference. This one-week pilot project can also be a great learning opportunity to understand what can and cannot be composted as well as a chance to see if composting might be something you would be interested in.

We will also be keeping track of how much food waste we have collected over the week. This information along with feedback we receive through the Composting Survey will be valuable information for this project moving forward. **This will help us better understand the interest and demand for a food waste collection service as well as testing and growing the capacity of local vendors.**

What happens at the end of the week? Does the program stop or do I have to start paying? What do I do with the bucket?

This program is a one week only, free, pilot program for Vine residents who have registered. After the week is over and you have collected your food scraps you can place the full bucket with food scraps in the curb lawn outside your house and **we will pick it up on 9/3.**

If you miss putting your bucket out on the 9/3 pick-up day or would prefer to drop off your bucket, you can simply place your bucket along the driveway at the **Bike Farm (519 Village Street) any time 9/3 – 9/5** or bring it to the **Farmers' Market (1204 Bank Street) on 9/5** for the regular food waste drop off.

What can be placed in the bucket?

Think vegetables, fruits, coffee grounds, tea leaves, and dry paper scraps. Grains are great too! Avoid placing meat, dairy, greases, chemicals, and trash in your bucket.

How can I continue composting after the week is over?

Below are some resources if you are interested in composting after the 1 week pilot project is over.

1. Backyard Composting Resources

- EPA Composting at Home
www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home
- Michigan EGLE Home Composting Guide
www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-whmd-swp-HomeComposting_247546_7.pdf
- MSU Extension Great Compost in 5 Easy Steps
www.canr.msu.edu/news/great_compost_in_five_easy_steps

2. Using a Local Vendor

- Bike Farm, Kalamazoo
\$2 for self-drop at the Bike Farm or farmers market and \$6 for home pick-up.
- KalamaKompost
<https://kalamakompost.com/>

3. Start a Community Collection Area

Contact your neighborhood association to express interest in starting or using a community collection area or shared service.

Sources:

<https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home>

<https://www.urbanrootsgr.org/yourcompost>

<http://www.reimaginetrash.org/learn/composting/>

<https://extension.uga.edu/publications/detail.html?number=B1189&title=Food%20Waste%20Composting:%20Institutional%20and%20Industrial%20Application#:~:text=Composting%20is%20the%20natural%20process,decomposed%20into%20high%20quality%20compost.>

<https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions#future-emissions>