

Christchurch's organics plant and your green bin kerbside waste

Christchurch's organics plant and your green bin kerbside waste

Each year, the Organics Processing Plant will process approximately 55,000 tonnes of organic (food and vegetation) material. Over 45,000 tonnes of this comes from Christchurch City residents' green organic bins.



Living Earth's Organics Plant

25 collection vehicles collect approximately 173 tonnes of organic material, 5 days a week, from your green organics bin.



Lowest organic contamination rate in Australasia

The Organics Plant has a very low contamination rate compared to other plants in Australasia. This is all credit to you putting only food and vegetation waste into your green lidded bin.

The contamination rate of green bins and green waste is currently around 2.5%; ultimately the Council aims for less than 1%.

Contamination is from:

- plastic bags containing food waste
- ash
- sawdust

remember to wrap your food scraps in newspaper before placing in your organics bin. and put ash and sawdust into your red rubbish bin.



Contamination by plastic bag

What happens to your organic waste?

The conversion of food and vegetation to compost is a completely natural process.

- The kerbside collection truck arrives at the plant and the load is checked for contamination.
- It is then wetted, shredded and put into an enclosed tunnel for at least seven days.
- The Scada, a computer program, will monitor the composting process in the tunnel for at least seven days.
- The material is removed from the tunnel in a stable condition, i.e. odour free, and does not attract rodents, birdlife or insects.
- The material is then placed in windrows (outdoor row) for two months so it can continue to mature.
- The temperature is monitored to ensure it does not get too hot or cold, which would affect the natural composting process.
- A Scarab (clever bit of machinery) turns the windrow to airate and wet the compost. This encourages continual microbial activity to ensure that it does not become anaerobic (no air) and decompose – which would ruin the compost.
- As your food and vegetation turns into compost, it is moved into larger piles and samples are sent for testing herbicides and nutritional value to ensure that the material meets the Compost Standard.
- Once full maturity occurs, the compost is screened and blended into different products which will be sold to the rural sector as fertiliser to enrich the soil for cropping or grazing or to help rehabilitate forestry blocks.

Other material that is delivered to the Plant

An extra 6,000 tonnes of green waste is dropped at the site every year by businesses and the public.

- This material is shredded and wetted and put directly into windrows.
- If the material is vegetation only it will not need to be tunnelled as there is no unstable material, i.e. food waste, in it.
- The windrows are turned regularly by the Scarab over a three and a half month period.
- Once mature, the material is either blended with other compost or sold as mulch.



Organic green bin waste arrives at Plant



Enclosed tunnel for 21 days



Scarab turning the Windrows



Compost being delivered to its new home.