

# Composting program a-peels to Union City Farmer's Market

**F**armers think throwing away food waste instead of recycling it is the absolute pits. So the operators of Union City's weekly farmer's market were berry excited when the Food Scrap Recycling for Business program came along.

"We love it," says Sarah Nelson, special projects coordinator for the Pacific Coast Farmer's Market Association. "It helps to ensure that any food waste generated by the market is going to the right place."

A-pear-ently customers are nuts about the program, too. "It's been going really well," she adds.

"The farmer's market is a good place to learn about organics recycling," Nelson explains. "People don't always realize they can put their food waste in the same cart with their yard trimmings." Now more people give peas a chance...to decompose.

Although the association initially had people on hand to help customers figure out what to put where, "people 'got it' right away, and we didn't have a lot of contamination."



The hardest part was finding a place to leaf the carts between market days. "Bronco Billy's has been nice enough to let us keep the bins behind their business," Nelson says.

The composting program stems from a desire to close the recycling loop. Farmers bring their crops to the market. Residents buy the vegetables. Corn husks, apple cores and other food  
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**Chong Thao, manager of the Union City Farmer's Market, demonstrates how vendors and shoppers can reduce waste by putting food scraps in the composting cart.**

## New rates take effect July 1

Each year, Union City's City Council reviews the rates charged by Allied Waste and makes any needed adjustments. The City controls the waste management franchise, and it receives a portion of the funds to pay for various city services.

A new rate schedule, which takes effect July 1, was not available at the time this newsletter went to print. Once the council approves the schedule, it will be posted at [www.unioncity.org/recycle/garbage\\_rates.htm](http://www.unioncity.org/recycle/garbage_rates.htm)



### Holiday collection schedule:

*There will be no holiday changes to your collection schedule until Thanksgiving, Nov. 25-26*

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

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# What goes in which container?

## GREEN WASTE

### Yes:

- Food scraps
  - Fruits, vegetables
  - Meat, seafood
  - Dairy, eggs
  - Breads, pastas
  - Tea bags, coffee grounds
- Food-soiled paper
  - Paper cups, plates
  - Paper towels, napkins
  - Waxed cardboard

- Yard trimmings
  - Grass, leaves
  - Twigs, branches
  - Plants, flowers
- Wood
  - Produce crates
  - Wood scraps
  - Sawdust

### No:

- Plastic (all types)
- Styrofoam™
- Glass
- Metal
- Grease or tallow
- Liquids

## RECYCLING

### Yes:

- Paper (white, colored, fax, gloss)
- Envelopes, file folders
- Newspapers, magazines, phone books
- Cardboard (flattened)
- Glass bottles and jars
- Aluminum and tin cans
- Plastic shrink wrap (bagged in clear bags)
- Plastic food and beverage containers\*
- Triple-rinsed plastic chemical bottles\*
- \*look for 1-7 on the bottom (no Styrofoam)

### No:

- Styrofoam™
- Carbon paper and treated papers
- Transparencies and photographs
- Food waste and food soiled papers
- Wood, pallets
- Window glass/mirrors
- Metals (except aluminum and tin cans)
- Landscape waste
- Carpet
- Restroom, hazardous or medical waste

## GARBAGE

### Yes:

- Non-recyclable paper or plastics
- Transparencies and photographs
- Styrofoam, bubble wrap
- Glass/mirrors, if packaged safely
- Non-recyclable metals
- Toys, ceramics
- Carpet, fabrics
- Broken-down pallets
- Restroom waste

### No:

- Batteries
- Fluorescent tubes
- Hazardous and medical waste
- Sharps (needles, syringes)
- Liquids/oil/grease
- Loose glass shards
- Appliances and electronics
- Concrete, asphalt, dirt, rocks
- Construction debris, fences, tires

### Farmer's Market

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scraps are composted. Farmers use compost to grow more crops. "It helps people connect with the farmers," Nelson notes.

She hopes the Farmer's Market will serve as a roll model for caterers,

churches, schools and other community groups and businesses that regularly hold events where food is served.

To encourage businesses to participate in composting, the City subsidizes disposal costs. "Union City is one of the best deals in terms of cost, service and what's provided," Nelson asserts. She should know. The Pacific Coast Farmer's Market As-

sociation also provides composting carts at its farmer's markets in Livermore, San Leandro, Oakland and Alameda.

The Union City Farmer's Market is held year round from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday at Old Alvarado Park. It started composting food scraps last fall.

Orange you glad they did?