



Community Engagement in Ramsey & Washington Counties

DURABLE COMPOSTABLE BAGS FOR FOOD SCRAPS COLLECTION

Ramsey and Washington counties are developing a new program to collect food scraps from residents. Here's how it would work:

- Residents would be given free compostable bags to collect food scraps in
- When the bags are full, residents would place them into their trash carts
- The bags would be collected along with the trash
- After collection, the bags would be separated from trash at transfer stations and the Recycling & Energy Center
- Bags are sent to facilities to be recycled into compost and energy

Engagement Overview

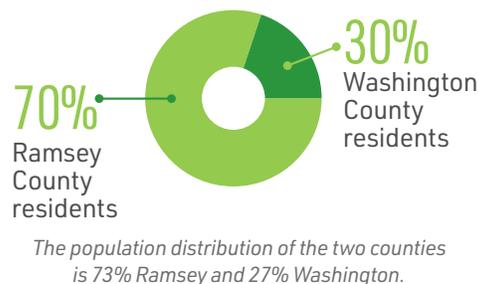
- Included online survey and in person interviews conducted November 2019 through January 2020
- Feedback received through the engagement process and outlined in this document is helping shape program development.
- Thank you to those who participated - your feedback is valuable in creating a program that effectively and equitably serves residents of Ramsey and Washington counties.

Survey Method

132
In-person interviews
Participants were offered an incentive for participation

9
Locations
Including food scraps (organics) drop-off sites, public libraries, CLUES, Hmong Village, and Fix-It Clinics

2,380
Online survey responses
Survey shared via county and municipality online channels.



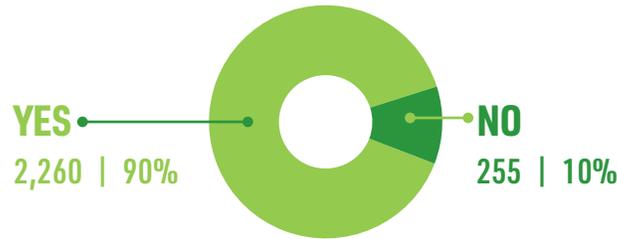
Banana peels, eggshells, chicken bones, moldy leftovers—there are a lot of different terms for these items. What do you refer to them as?



Note: "compost" was not included as option in online survey, so this answer is likely underrepresented.



Do you think you might participate in this program?



Primary reasons for "Yes" responses

- Good for the earth
 - *Right thing to do*
 - *Want to reduce my waste*
 - *Less to landfill/incinerator*
 - *Want to fight climate change*
- It's so easy—why not?
- I already compost, and this will make it easier for me

Reasons for hesitation

- Concerns about the process—bags breaking or decomposing/sorting technology not working well/separate carts as more effective
- Already compost at home/prefer drop off sites
- Smell/rodents/insects
- Too much work/waste of time
- Cost
- Unsure of whether this would be available in multi-unit dwellings
- Concerns about where to fit another container in kitchen
- Concerns about how this would impact people who minimize use of trash service
- Don't trust government/haulers to implement this well

How would you like to get these bags?

Order online and have mailed to you

1754

Pick up in person at public building

961

You would get 1-2 free bags per week. What size bags would you prefer?

Small

1001

Medium

1269

Large

408

Small described as size of plastic bag from grocery store, large as size of kitchen trash bag.

Comments about bag size

- Small is ideal bag size, but 1-2 small bags per week would not be enough.
- Requests for availability of multiple bag sizes
- Small bags ideal for these reasons
 - *Don't want this type of waste in house for too long*
 - *Nice to store on top of counter*
 - *This type of waste is heavy*

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“Between this program and recycling, much of my weekly ‘garbage’ would be eliminated.”

“I have been trying to start composting for years but the convenience factor has not been there yet!”

“BRING IT ON”

“Messy stinky sorry no. We recycle but this is too much.”

“Free compostable bags? Nothing is free, who is paying/subsidizing this program?”

“Drop them at my door regularly. I don't want to have to order repeatedly online.”

“Small bags would be better for those of us who keep a compost bin in the kitchen, because then it won't get as stinky, but 1 or 2 is not enough per week. 3-5 small bags would be best, I think.”