



Media Release

For Immediate Release

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New Measures Aim to Curb Compost Contamination in Summerland

SUMMERLAND – The District of Summerland is ramping up efforts this summer to reduce contamination in its curbside collection program. New trucks equipped with cameras, staff inspections of carts at the curb, and improved equipment at the compost site are all part of a focused campaign to ensure only the right materials end up in the green bin.

Since launching curbside food scraps collection in April 2024, Summerland has made major strides in diverting waste from the landfill. More than 450 tonnes of food scraps have been composted instead of buried, and the resulting compost has been eagerly snapped up by local gardeners and landscapers. The program has also saved the District close to \$30,000, thanks to composting costs being one-third the price of landfilling.

However, contamination remains the program's biggest challenge. Items like plastic tubs, cardboard, glass, and compostable plastic bags are still showing up in green carts — and they don't belong there.

Why does this matter? Because at the end of the composting process, that compost goes back into the soil — into the gardens, farms, and orchards that grow our food. If the compost is contaminated, it can introduce microplastics, glass shards, and chemical residues into the very food we eat. Keeping your green bin clean isn't just about helping the planet — it's about protecting your plate.

Common mistakes include:

- Food containers (plastic, glass, or paper tubs) which should be washed and recycled instead.
- Cardboard and pizza boxes, which don't break down well and belong in the recycling cart.
- Plastic bags and produce stickers, even those labeled compostable, which can clog equipment and leave behind microplastics.

To address this, the District is deploying single-stream trucks — one for each material — to eliminate mixing during collection. Staff will also inspect carts and follow up with households that need help sorting correctly. A new compost screener will further help remove any remaining contaminants from finished compost.

Despite the challenges, most Summerland residents are using the program correctly.

For more information about what can and cannot go into your green cart, visit the District of Summerland website at <https://www.summerland.ca/city-services/garbage-recycling/curbside-collection/residential-dwellings/curbside-yard-garden-waste>. You can also contact **works@summerland.ca** or call **250-494-0431**.

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2 photos attached

WHAT CAN GO IN THE GREEN CART?

YUM!



ALL FOOD SCRAPS



PASTA



RICE



COFFEE
GROUNDS



MEAT, FISH &
EGG SHELLS



FRUITS & VEGGIES



CHEESE



BREAD

YARD WASTE



GRASS CLIPPINGS



LEAVES



PINE NEEDLES
& CONES



SMALL STICKS

FOOD SOILED PAPER



SOILED NAPKINS



PAPER PLATES



PAPER FILTERS

**FOOD SCRAPS MAKE COMPOST,
COMPOST MAKES FOOD**

EWV.



KEEP PLASTICS OUT OF THE GREEN CART