

Press Release

Preston — The Preston Board of Selectmen has unanimously approved a new, free food scrap recycling pilot program to begin January 1st, 2024.

[Blue Earth Compost, based in Hartford](#), will be placing food scrap collection bins at the Preston Transfer Station, located at 108 Ross Road.

The program is free to all town residents with a transfer station pass.

Blue Earth will collect the food scraps and haul them to [Quantum Biopower](#), a state [Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#)-approved anaerobic digester in Southington.

In 21 days, Quantum can convert the food scraps into compost, and contain the methane byproduct inside the facility into bio-gas that generates electricity for the town of Southington.

Killingworth pays to have municipal solid waste incinerated at the SECONN facility in town. Data from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) states that about 22% of the waste stream is food.

The ultimate goal is to reduce the amount of tonnage incinerated by removing food from the trash. Other surrounding towns, such as Haddam, Deep River, Guilford, Old Saybrook and Essex are participating in similar food scrap recycling programs.

Food scraps can be converted into compost, which improves soil quality, reduces the need for chemical fertilizers, helps to retain water in the soil, and reduces soil erosion, the town said.

Many food items cannot not be placed in a backyard compost. All food scraps can be composted through the anaerobic digester.

“If it Grows, it Goes” is the Blue Earth motto. Acceptable items include fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry and bones, fish/shellfish and shells, dairy products, bread, pasta, rice, grains, eggs, eggshells, chips and snacks, nuts and seeds, left over and spoiled food, coffee grounds, tea bags (no staples), paper towels and napkins used for food production (not for cleaning), cut flowers and pet food (no pet waste).

There are starter kits available at the Town Office Building. The first 100 residents will get a roll of 25 compostable bags and a larger 6-gallon bin to place food scraps for free by visiting: <https://www.preston-ct.org>. Starter kits are not required in order to participate.