

Media Release  
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# International Compost Awareness Week

## #CompostOnMiMind

Emmet County Recycling (ECR) celebrates International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) May 5-11, 2024 with education and tours. The Governor's office has also signed the proclamation to formally recognize ICAW in the State of Michigan. This year's theme: COMPOST...Nature's Climate Champion. Composting fights climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from landfills, stores carbon and conserves water. It enriches soil, promotes healthy plant growth, and reduces erosion. It's nature's way of nourishing soil, crops, and communities.

You can make a positive impact on our planet and become educated on the topic: join a tour, host/attend a compost workshop and start removing food scraps from your waste stream.

Give All Food a Future (GAFAF) is an Emmet County Recycling program established in 2015 to collect food scraps from businesses and community host sites. 2023 numbers totaled 660,878 pounds of food and floral scraps diverted from landfill, amassing over 4 million pounds in the last eight years. This is the equivalent of removing annual emissions from 280 passenger vehicles, conserving 148,619 gallons of gasoline or conserving 55,032 cylinders of propane for home barbeques. Our community GAFAF carts saw an increase this year of 63% at the City Park Grill community collection and 45% for the Petoskey Farmers Market. Additional locations include the Pleasantview Drop Off Center and Harbor Springs Farmers Market.

The next step in closing-the-loop on food waste is with the use of our locally generated, independently tested and screened compost. ECR compost has no limitations to its use – use for raised garden beds, hoop houses, container gardening, landscaping in and around buildings, planting trees, bushes and re-seeding of lawns. It is far better at growing and sustaining plant life than topsoil and reduces the needs for chemical fertilizers.

ECR compost can be purchased at the Pleasantview Drop Off Center in Harbor Springs by the bag or by the load; the right quantity for any sized project.

Even better than composting your food scraps is minimizing your food waste. Tips for reducing food waste include:

- Checking your fridge before shopping.
- Storing milk on lower, cooler fridge shelves.
- Opting for a smaller shopping basket.

- Adjusting fridge humidity for fruits and veggies.
- Planning meals for leftovers.
- Designating an "eat first" fridge section.
- Ignoring expiration dates; food is often still good if it looks and smells okay.
- Using ripe fruit for smoothies.
- More tips at [emmetrecycling.org](http://emmetrecycling.org).

In essence, composting is nature's climate champion, fostering healthier ecosystems, communities, and food systems. Join us in embracing composting as a crucial tool in combating climate change and building a sustainable future. Call Emmet County Recycling to discover the joys of backyard composting or get a tour on Monday, May 6 or Thursday, May 9! Register at [emmetrecycling.org](http://emmetrecycling.org).

Thank you to the 2023 food scrap collection participating businesses:

Stafford's Bay View Inn	The Highlands Main Lodge (Boyne)
Petoskey Children's Nature Preschool	The Highlands Day Lodge (Boyne)
Petoskey Middle School	Country Club of Boyne
Petoskey High School	Harbor Springs IGA
Tap 30	Tom's Mom's Cookies
POUR	Gurney's
Backlot	The New York
Julienne Tomatoes	Stafford's Pier
Parkside Deli	Little Harbor Club
Grain Train	Little Traverse Yacht Club
Monarch Garden & Floral Design	A.R. Pontius Flower Shop
Emmet County Building	The Manna Food Project
Stafford's Perry Hotel	Yoga Roots
Beards Brewery	Toski Sands
Roast & Toast	Emmet County Pleasantview Drop Off Center
Iron Horse Café at North Central Michigan College	Inn at Bay Harbor
Odawa Casino	Petoskey Brewing
Friendship Center & Council on Aging	Little Juice
LTBB Food Warehouse	Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
LTBB Natural Resources Department	GAFAF Petoskey Farmers Market
LTBB Government Building	GAFAF City Park Grill
Morrison Healthcare Foodservice (McLaren)	GAFAF Harbor Springs Farmers Market