

clover food lab



Sara here - I run [catering](#) at Clover and I'm really passionate about food waste. That's Isla, 3.5, my daughter, and my best compost helper. Every week, one of us takes the compost outside, scrubs the bucket, and endures/enjoys that distinct aroma.

We grow food, process it, eat it, and no matter how hard we try, there's (what feels like) inevitable waste. In fact, 40% of food produced, processed, and transported in the U.S. is wasted and ends up in our landfills. Next to meat production, food waste is [the biggest food-related contributor to climate change](#).

For us, it doesn't matter how freezing cold or rainy it is outside, we'll pop on our oldest pair of slippers and make the trek to the compost.

The bulk of our compost is veggie scraps/produce waste, spent coffee grounds, and eggshells. All of our Clover servingware also makes the cut, because it's compostable! And when our parties require single-use serving-ware, we are sure to shop compostable. Dead plants, old soil, and lawn clippings all also get a second life in our compost heap.

The good news? The hardest part of composting is making the trip to the heap. Once it's there, all it takes is the occasional mixing to help the breakdown occur.

Each spring, I feed all of my rhododendrons and azaleas with compost and they've made it clear it's their favorite nutritional source. (No more expensive manufactured fertilizers for them!)

I mix compost into my herb, fruit, and vegetable garden. The nutrition and moisture the compost provides makes growing a gorgeous garden easier than I could have imagined. We truly have become lazy gardeners - how's that for an oxymoron?! Last year, we started dumping our waste directly into a hole in the garden and mixed it in at the end of the year. How easy is that?

A sign of healthy soil is big, fat, juicy worms. And we take pride in our worm population. My children love discovering them in the soil and thanking them for helping our garden grow. They're our treasured wild pets that are a crucial part of my family's ecosystem.

At fall's end, we clear out the garden of frozen stalks, dead roots, and other remnants of what once was a bountiful food source. And where do these dead plants go? You guessed it, right back into the compost. It's a beautiful cycle.

So, give it a shot. It's free. It's natural. It helps plants, animals, people, and the environment. Even if you don't have a yard, you can participate by helping create compost.

I'll close by showing you a photo. I didn't plant these acorn squash. They grew from my compost heap.



Composting Resources

+ Boston offers curbside food waste collection for buildings with six units or fewer. Residents of bigger buildings can use any of [Project Oscar's](#) 15 drop-off points. If you have questions, you can reach out to Oscar@boston.gov or call 617.635.3850.

+ Tabletop composters are also an incredibly convenient way to compost in tight quarters. [Explore the internet for infinite options](#).

+ Many towns outside of the city offer free or low cost composting bins. Check your town's website and sign up for one now.

+ [Composting Cheat Sheet](#)

+ [List of composting programs in Boston](#)

