ZEROWASTE

The Life Cycle of Food Waste: Composting Explained



Collection and Consolidation

Organic waste collected by haulers is processed into compost at a specialized facility. Green bin waste from the Lantzville area and north is consolidated at the **Church Road Transfer Station (CRTS)** before delivery. Organic waste from the rest of the region is delivered directly to **Convertus in Duke Point**.

At Convertus, materials are unloaded onto a tipping floor and inspected for material that can't be composted. Incoming food waste is then mixed with ground yard waste using a specific formula that **balances carbon, nitrogen and moisture levels** for optimal composting. The facility's process is aerobic and fully enclosed which ensures methane, a powerful greenhouse gas, is not released into the atmosphere. Through partnership with the RDN, Convertus upgraded their facility in 2022, which included negative air pressure systems and advanced air scrubbers, to minimize the escape of unpleasant odours from the facility into the surrounding community.



The Composting Process

Convertus uses an in-vessel composting process to complete composting in just 14 days. In other communities, composting can take up to several weeks to several months. After mixing, the waste is loaded into sealed concrete tunnels equipped with aerated floors and irrigation. Each two-week process meets the **British Columbia Organic Matter Recycling Regulation (OMRR) requirements**, including maintaining a minimum temperature of 55°C for 72 consecutive hours to eliminate pathogens (viruses, bacteria, parasites etc), weed seeds and attractants that appeal to animals and insects.

The composted material is then screened to remove plastics, contaminants and heavy soils from organic waste, leaving only **nutrient-rich compost**. Items like wood, which require more time to break down, are stored in large outdoor aerated bays and mixed back in at the beginning of the process. Using part of a Clean BC Grant, Convertus installed an advanced screening system in early 2025, which will further improve finished compost quality.

Testing

Following screening, compost is sampled and tested in a **third-party lab** to ensure quality requirements are met before sale. The final product **meets the BC Ministry of Environment OMRR requirements** for **Class A compost** and is unrestricted in its application.



Products

Compost produced from the region's residential and commercial food waste is used in **landscaping, agriculture, gardening and sports field applications.**

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