



## Dried Flower Power!

Before you drop them in the green organics cart or your home compost pile, turn your spring blooms into beautiful dried flower bouquets! Dry them now and enjoy them for seasons to come.

Here are two ways to dry flowers:

- Air Dry:**
- Tie up flower stems and hang them—each stem on its own, or as a bouquet—upside down for a few days.
  - If you hang them away from a wall (which can flatten them) and out of direct sunlight, they'll keep their natural shape and color.
- Food Dehydrator:**
- If you have a food dehydrator, you can also use it to dry flowers! Set it to about 100 degrees, and place the flowers so they don't overlap with one another. (Ask your parents for assistance!)

Once your flowers are dried, there are lots of ways to enjoy them for yourself or to give as gifts to your friends and family: press them into a clear phone case, make framed monogram art or even display them, dried, in a vase!

Send photos of your dried flower art to [Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)

# The garden issue

This winter was wet and wild—with winds and rain wreaking havoc on our yards and gardens.

Now that the storms have settled, it's time to take stock and clear away the broken branches, wet leaves and other yard debris left in the wake. Your green organics cart is where you should dispose your food scraps. But did you know that yard trimmings can also go into your green organics cart?

Yes! Your green organics cart happily accepts certain kinds of yard trimmings and debris:

- Flower cuttings
- House plants (shake dirt off)
- Shrubbery
- Vines (NO poison oak)
- Cacti
- Flower arrangements
- Lawn clippings
- Untreated wood less than 4' long and 6" in diameter
- Garden trimmings
- Leaves
- Wood chips
- Hay and straw
- Prunings
- Weeds

Adding yard trimmings to your green organics cart reduces the amount of organic material that goes to the landfill, which helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions. You can also start your home compost pile with yard trimmings—plus, it helps cut down the smell of your food scraps.

Can't fit everything in your green organics cart? Call Republic Services at 925-685-4711 to upsize your cart at no additional cost (up to 96 gallons)! Or schedule an on-call cleanup—up to four times per year—also at no cost to you.

So get garden ready! Read on to find more tips like the ones above and get excited for sunnier days ahead.



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- The dirt on compost
- Earn an A+ with our cart checks
- Take our food scraps pledge!

# Marian's guide to compost



Meet the RecycleSmart compost team!  
Left to right: Lorraine, Billi and Marian



## Share the (Fruit) Wealth

Do you have fruit trees in your backyard that produce more than your household can eat (with fruit dropping to the ground)? Register your trees for free with Contra Costa Fruit Rescue! This organization uses local volunteers to pick (glean) your fruit and donates it to local food recovery organizations, food pantries, shelters and the food bank. Find out more or sign up to volunteer at [Forestr.org/fruit-rescue](http://Forestr.org/fruit-rescue)

Want to know how you can start composting at home? Ask RecycleSmart! We have a variety of composting workshops available for you to learn how to get your garden thriving. If you end up signing up, you might meet Marian Woodard, a RecycleSmart composting instructor who has worked with countless residents on their composting journey. "Composting is a small way we can give back to the earth," she said. "It is a way to honor what we eat and the work that goes into maintaining healthy plants."

Here are some of Marian's tips to get you started:

- **Start small.** Ask for a free kitchen food scraps pail and place it by your trash can or kitchen sink to remind yourself to separate out your food scraps from your

- trash. Request yours today by calling Republic Services at 925-685-4711.
- **Try vermicomposting.** "Worm castings make the best gift ever," Marian said. "If you want to make a gardener smile immediately, give them a bag of worm castings!"
- **Attend a workshop.** RecycleSmart offers composting workshops where instructors like Marian can walk you through how to get started.

Why she loves it? "Composting and doing the work that I do is a way to give back to the planet that I love so dearly."

Residents who compost at home can request a Republic Services monthly bill reduction (compost certification)! To apply, or to get more information, visit [RecycleSmart.org/Composting](http://RecycleSmart.org/Composting)

**LET'S GET SOCIAL**

We share tips and info about our services, ways to reduce waste and so much more on our social media. Give us a follow [@Recyclesmartorg](https://www.instagram.com/Recyclesmartorg) (Instagram) and [@CCCSWA](https://www.facebook.com/CCCSWA) (Facebook).

**COMING UP!**

Mark your calendars! International Compost Awareness Week is May 7-13! The theme this year is: **For Healthier Soil, Healthier Food...Compost!** Also, this year's **Compost Giveaway** dates are **April 22** and **May 6**. Learn more at [RecycleSmart.org/ICAW](http://RecycleSmart.org/ICAW)



# Kudos for proper sorting

In alignment with SB 1383, California's organics law, RecycleSmart performs annual route reviews to educate residents on how to use their three—blue, green and black—carts properly.

During a route review, an inspector will come by to do a visual "lid flip" to make sure the items in your carts are sorted correctly. If they see items in a cart that do not belong, they might leave an outreach tag with helpful tips and suggestions.

You can get a gold star by keeping these common items (contaminants) out of your green organics cart:

- Plastic bags
- Pet waste (even in compostable bags)
- Food in any packaging (rotisserie chicken still in plastic, fish still on foil, etc.)
- Coated paper foodware (paper coffee cups, shiny to-go boxes, etc.)
- Glass containers
- Treated or large wood with nails
- Irrigation equipment and planters with plants still in them

Learn more about the green organics cart at [RecycleSmart.org/greencartsmart](https://RecycleSmart.org/greencartsmart)

California state law SB 1383 requires local jurisdictions to monitor contamination and proper sorting by performing annual audits. Visit [RecycleSmart.org/1383](https://RecycleSmart.org/1383).

**GREAT JOB!**  
Thank you for sorting smart!

Like RecycleSmart on Facebook and post your cart tag for a reusable gift.

**PROPER SORTING**  
ORGANICS RECYCLING LANDFILL

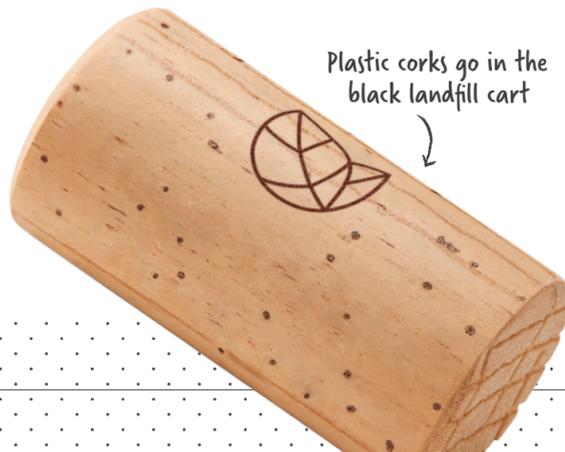
**SPECIAL HANDLING**  
Household Hazardous Waste: It is illegal to place HHW in your curbside carts. Paint, Cleaners, Fluorescent tubes and other hazardous materials should be taken to the HHW Facility in Martinez. For information visit [www.cccwa.org](https://www.cccwa.org).  
Batteries: Single family residents: place small household batteries in a clear sealed bag on top of blue recycling cart. Apartments & Businesses: drop off at a retail location listed at [RecycleSmart.org/HHW](https://RecycleSmart.org/HHW).  
Textiles: Please reuse or donate textiles. Place in the black landfill cart if textiles are not reusable.

# Breaking it down

Using compost in your garden has so many benefits, both to your plants and the larger environment!



Natural cork goes in the green organics cart



## Need More Info?



Editor, Janna McKay  
Janna@RecycleSmart.org

For tips, resources and other recycling services!

[www.RecycleSmart.org](https://www.RecycleSmart.org)  
925-906-1801  
Authority@RecycleSmart.org

For questions about your bi-annual Reuse Day contact Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery at 925-692-2286 or visit [RecycleSmart.org/reuse-day](https://RecycleSmart.org/reuse-day)



### Organics, Recycling and Landfill

925-685-4711

For questions concerning your recycling, organics or landfill carts, billing, new service, vacation hold requests, computer and TV collection, special cleanups or to request motor oil recycling kits and kitchen food scraps containers.



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### WE DON'T TRASH FOOD PLEDGE

I pledge to inform a family member, friend, co-worker or neighbor that food is not trash, and that all food scraps can go in the green organics cart.

By sharing information with your community, the message grows.

Go to [RecycleSmart.org/greencartsmart](https://RecycleSmart.org/greencartsmart) or use the QR code to the left to sign up and spread the word.



My Tips

## Vermicompost: Let Worms do the Work

Gene S., Walnut Creek

Part of my resolution for this year is to do a better job with my food scraps, so I started vermicomposting, or worm composting. It's similar to backyard composting, except that it uses manure worms (or red wigglers!) to help break down soft organic material like food scraps.

I used a 14-gallon plastic storage bin. Once I got it set up, it kind of runs itself! I can't wait to use the leftover worm castings and worm "tea" to feed my plants and garden.

My tip for other readers: You can buy a worm bin or make it yourself. I found lots of info—how to build and maintain my worm bin, what kinds of foods to use, and how to harvest worm castings—at [RecycleSmart.org/WormComposting](https://RecycleSmart.org/WormComposting) and now I'm set!

Who's with me?



### HAVE TIPS TO SHARE?

Send your ideas to [Authority@RecycleSmart.org](mailto:Authority@RecycleSmart.org)