



Homemade Ornaments

Make your own salt dough ornaments this season with natural, compostable ingredients! A great addition to your tree or a fun gift for friends and family.

- 1 Preheat oven to 200°.
- 2 To a bowl, add 4 cups of all-purpose flour, 1 cup of salt, and slowly add 1 ½ cups of water.
- 3 You can add food coloring or natural scents such as lavender and rosemary.
- 4 Mix and knead together.
- 5 Roll dough out and cut shapes or imprint your hand! Use chopsticks or a pencil to make a hanger hole.
- 6 Bake until hard, about an hour.
- 7 Once cooled, add ribbon or string and enjoy your decor!

RecycleSmart
Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority
1850 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Ste. 320
Walnut Creek, CA 94596

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STANDARD
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PERMIT NO. 99



FALL 2025

Spread the Love— of Recycling!

During the holidays, many of us welcome loved ones into our homes—sometimes from far away. As you reconnect with friends and family, you can use this quality time to teach your out-of-town guests some helpful tips to reduce, reuse, and recycle. It's a gift that keeps on giving!



Set Up Sorting Stations

- Place attractive sorting stations where people are gathering
- Ask your younger guests to create fun signs!
- Keep additional bins in spots like the bathroom (yes, empty TP rolls are recyclable!), or where you're unwrapping gifts



Encourage Creative Wrapping

- Reuse materials like shopping bags or beautiful scarves
- Save your wrapping paper to reuse year after year
- Glitter is a big no-no—keep it out of your recycling



Give Experiences as Gifts

- Take a guest on a visit to a local museum or exhibition
- Plan an excursion to go on together, like a sunset picnic or a hike at Mt. Diablo
- Extend your memories with a digital photo album to share!

If you've got your own ideas for reducing holiday waste, share them with us! The key is to be positive—**you don't have to be a Grinch to be green!**



Holiday Pickups

Alert! It's around the corner! Christmas 2025 and New Year's Day 2026 both fall on Thursdays. Our truck drivers have Christmas and New Years Day off. Then they work over the weekend to make sure every home gets its weekly service.

What this means for you:

- **Friday service days:** If your normal service day is Friday, instead your pickups will be on **Saturday, December 27th and January 3rd.**

Holiday tree pickups will be in January on the same day as your regular garbage service but by a separate truck. Watch for a postcard announcing your tree pickup date.

- **Thursday service days:** if your normal service day is Thursday, your pickups will be on **Friday, December 26th and January 2nd.**

Choose the Winners!

The nominations for our community waste reduction grant are in. It's time for grantee selection, and Central Contra Costa residents get to choose! Voting is open now through November 30th at [ContraCostaRecycles.com](https://www.contracostarecycles.com)



↖ Lose the liner! Clear or no bag is best.

[RecycleSmart.org](https://www.RecycleSmart.org)



A-pear-antly,
we can all help!



REAL RECYCLERS, EPISODE 2

Harvest Helpers

Our Real Recyclers of Lafayette, the Knolle family, got to work with Contra Costa Fruit Rescue picking pears and apples in Lafayette earlier this year.

They found a nearby shift online and signed up (you can sign up as little as a few days before, but a week is better!), then got the address and shift info. When they showed up to the designated spot, it was time to follow the lead of harvest leader Pat Shultz.

Pat taught the group how to correctly pick fruit from trees without causing damage and how to use a fruit-picking pole. "She shared so much about the fruit itself," Laura Knolle reported,

feeling a new appreciation for the hard work it takes to make harvests happen. "We left feeling tired yet proud of our efforts!"

Contra Costa Fruit Rescue hosts harvests in yards and orchards and donates the bounty to local people and food banks. The Knolles took home a bag of fruit and some pretty great photos of their day.

Want to help harvest in your area? Check our website for ways to volunteer:

[RecycleSmart.org/volunteer](https://www.recycle-smart.org/volunteer) and more

about food recovery here:

[RecycleSmart.org/food-recovery](https://www.recycle-smart.org/food-recovery)

NOM NOM NOM-in-ate
this as your next
snack!

Need more info?



Editor, Janna McKay
Janna@RecycleSmart.org

For tips, resources and other recycling services!

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/cleanup](https://www.RecycleSmart.org/cleanup)



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.



Printed on paper made from post consumer waste (PCW).

Changing Our Food System, for the Climate

In 2016, Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill (SB) 1383 as part of a much larger climate initiative. The bill's goal was to limit greenhouse gas emissions, especially methane, from being released by rotting organics in landfills. The bill also planned to reduce waste—and feed more people—at all levels of our food system.

Reducing greenhouse gases like methane can have the fastest impact

THE PROBLEM

- Approximately **35%** of all food produced in the U.S. goes to waste
- Before SB 1383, organics made up half of what Californians dumped in landfills.
- Landfills produce **20%** of the state's methane, a climate "super pollutant" that heats the atmosphere **84 times** as much as carbon dioxide.

STATEWIDE GOALS

- By 2020:** 50% less organic waste sent to landfills
- By 2025:** 75% less organic waste sent to landfills
- 2025:** 20% more edible food recovered

THE PATH

1997

RecycleSmart began rolling out curbside organics service

2022

SB 1383 in effect!

- Curbside organics pickup is required at all residences and businesses
- Grocery stores and organizations that distribute large quantities of food are required to donate edible food

SB 1383 is the most significant change to California's waste management system in the last 30 years!

2024

Restaurants, hospitals, hotels, and other places that produce large quantities of food, are required to donate edible food

RESULTS STATEWIDE

217,042 tons

of unsold food was recovered by local programs in 2023

700 million

unsold meals went to Californians in need since food recovery rules started in 2022

Sources:
<https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/blog/food-waste-and-its-links-greenhouse-gases-and-climate-change>

Feed People & Fight Climate Change, CalRecycle, 9-12-2024

<https://calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slop/>

RESULTS IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

1,916,070
meals saved

1149.6
tons kept out of landfills

White Pony Express

5,900,296
meals saved

3,540
tons kept out of landfills

Contra Costa Fruit Rescue

59,642+
pounds of local fruits harvested in 2025

201,772+
pounds of local fruits harvested since January 2023

Learn more about food recovery at [RecycleSmart.org/food-recovery](https://www.recycle-smart.org/food-recovery) and SB 1383 at [RecycleSmart.org/foodgenerators](https://www.recycle-smart.org/foodgenerators). For info about how you can get involved today, tomorrow, or ongoing, visit [RecycleSmart.org/volunteer](https://www.recycle-smart.org/volunteer). Thank you!

A Letter for Better Packaging

Jeff M., Moraga

Dear RecycleSmart,

Love a product but not its packaging?

Email the company your feedback! It only takes a minute. Here's a template you can share with your readers:

Dear [Company Name],

I really enjoy your [product name] but can't help but notice the waste left over from the packaging. As a loyal customer, I would love to see you switch to recyclable or compostable packaging. It would make a huge difference.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kindly,
[Name]

From the editor: Great tip! To get in the loop on California's responsible packaging legislation, visit calrecycle.ca.gov/packaging/packaging-epr



HAVE TIPS TO SHARE?

Send your ideas to
Authority@RecycleSmart.org