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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Henderson County Begins Pilot Food Waste Collection, Offers Backyard Compost Workshops

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The Henderson County Solid Waste and Environmental Programs Divisions will be implementing another offering at the Convenience Center starting September 14th with a voluntary food waste collection program. Residents can bring food scraps and leftovers to the center and deposit them into two designated 64-gallon carts. Partnering with Atlas Organics, Henderson County is promoting a 10-month pilot program to offer expanded recycling and education opportunities about the importance of diverting food waste from household trash.

According to the US EPA, about 21% of all household trash in the United States is food waste, resulting in major losses of resources, energy, and dollars. Food waste in municipal solid waste is heavy to transport, produces odors, can attract vermin, and is not the best end for an organic resource that could otherwise be turned into a valuable soil component.

Rachel Kipar, Henderson County Environmental Programs Coordinator, is enthusiastic about adding this first-step program to community and regional conversations around food recovery and food waste. “As trends in the solid waste industry change with consumer behavior and recycling access across the nation, we understand that food waste and organics diversion from household trash absolutely has to be part of the larger waste reduction strategy. We hope to widen the conversation for our community, starting with this small-scale drop-off option at the Convenience Center.”

The best way to store food waste at home is in a container in your freezer to minimize bugs and smell. Users can bring food waste to the Convenience Center in a non-coated paper bag and throw the entire bag in the designated can. No plastic containers or bags are acceptable.

Starting on September 14th, users can bring the following items to the pilot program:

- breads and pastas
- coffee/tea grounds, paper filters/tea bags
- cooked meat, fish, poultry, bones (cooked only)
- herbs and greens
- eggshells and dairy
- grains and cereals
- fruits and vegetables
- leftovers and scraps
- rice and beans
- compostable containers
- cut flowers and stems
- paper towels and napkins
- soiled pizza boxes and paper bags

Unacceptable items include:

- aluminum foil, cans
- ash or coal
- bathroom products & baby wipes
- chewing gum
- glass
- household trash
- liquid cooking oil
- pet waste, fur, hair
- plastic containers, bags, film
- raw meat
- recyclables
- steel cans
- straws
- plastic silverware, plates
- textiles
- tobacco products
- yard waste and leaves

In addition, three backyard compost workshops taught by Asheville Greenworks will take place this fall to teach citizens about using food scraps and yard waste to make compost at home for gardening. Workshops dates are September 23, October 14, and October 17 and participants can pay \$15 for a DIY kit. The workshops are sponsored by the Henderson County Environmental Advisory Committee, the City of Hendersonville Environmental Sustainability Board, The Hendersonville Community Co-op, Henderson County Cooperative Extension, and the Land of Sky REV. Registration can be found online at www.hcrecycles.org.

Questions can be directed to (828) 697-4505 or (828) 694-6524.

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