

Dear Zero Waste Party Coordinator:

Thank you for your interest in throwing a Zero Waste event! The High Country Conservation Center (HC3) is a local nonprofit organization working to make community events zero waste. In order to minimize the amount of trash local events produce, we encourage participants to compost and recycle all containers, food and paper waste. There are a few simple things you can do to help make this happen!

The goal at a Zero Waste event is to plan ahead and use only materials that are recyclable or compostable (not materials that will end up in our landfill). You can use Zero Waste tents or bins for recycling and compost collection, as well as educational signage, at designated locations throughout the event. HC3 can also provide volunteers and staff to educate visitors. Please contact HC3 for pricing and information.

Compostable products are a great way to go and are easy to come by these days. Your current food vendor probably already has a cheap alternative to non-recyclable or non-compostable products. You just need to ask for it. Even Cisco offers compostable products like the PLA corn cups and utensils. Non-coated paper plates and bowls are also compostable and cost as much as Styrofoam and plastic.

Below, you will find the recycling and composting guidelines. Remember, if an item is not recyclable locally, we cannot recycle it, even if your supplier has told you it can be recycled.

Here are some helpful tips:

- Try offering finger foods or toothpicks (compostable) rather than disposable plastic utensils.
- Replace plastic or Styrofoam bowls with compostable paper bowls.
- Use paper napkins instead of plates - they are compostable and can replace bulkier plates.

Containers and Foodservice Products that are OK for COMPOSTING and RECYCLING	Containers and Foodservice Products that are DESTINED FOR THE LANDFILL
Uncoated paper plates, boats, and bowls that are <u>not</u> coated with plastic, and paper napkins (compostable)	Styrofoam (polystyrene) – It is not recyclable, regardless of the recycling symbol on the product
#1 and #2 plastic bottles & jugs (recyclable) and #7 compostable PLA cups (compostable)	Any #1-#7 plastic tubs, cups, and deli cups, #3-#7 plastic bottles, jugs, or clamshells
Cornstarch cutlery, including spoons, forks and knives (compostable)	Plastic cutlery
Waxed paper products (compostable) and aluminum foil (recyclable)	Saran wrap
Paper (compostable) and reusable bags	Plastic bags

If you have any questions as to whether your items are recyclable or compostable, or need help finding a local source for these products, please call the High Country Conservation Center at (970) 668-5703 or email jen@highcountryconservation.org. Check out the back of this letter for a list of places to find compostable products and answers to common questions.

Thank you. You play an important role in making local events zero waste (or darn near!).

Jennifer Santry
Community Programs Director
High Country Conservation Center
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Where can I find compostable products?

Most grocery stores sell compostable products (uncoated paper plates, napkins, bowls...). You can also find these products online (www.ecoproducts.com). If you are in doubt, please contact HC3 for help. Visit www.bpiworld.org for a database of certified compostable products. Be sure to take a look at the attached product list for examples of common brands of compostable products that are acceptable for Zero Waste events.

What is composting anyway?

Composting is a natural process of transforming food waste, paper products, and organics (things that were once alive) into a dark, rich healthy soil that can be applied to community gardens, trees, and landscaping and reclamation projects.

Why do we compost?

Contrary to most belief, the landfill is not a gigantic composting system. In fact, all of your leftovers, yard clippings, and organic waste that go into the garbage produce a hazardous gas called methane in a landfill environment. Methane is a greenhouse gas 72 times more potent than carbon dioxide. By keeping organics out of our landfill, you help combat climate change! Similar to recycling, composting also diverts materials from our landfill. Organics (including yard waste, food waste, paper, paperboard, and wood waste) make up over 65 percent of the waste stream. When you compost and recycle, you can keep over 80 percent of your garbage out of the landfill, extending our landfill's life for future generations.

What happens to the compostable products?

Summit County is very fortunate to have a large scale composting facility (High Country Compost) located at our landfill near Keystone. Compostable and recyclable materials are collected from zero waste events and travel a short distance to the Summit Resource Allocation Park. Recycling is bailed and shipped off to markets around the United States. Compostables are ground up and mixed with wood chips and turned into compost in a matter of weeks. This unique, closed-loop system includes compost collection from zero waste events, school lunch waste, and participating restaurants into a nutrient-rich soil that is contributed back to the community through local community garden projects.

Here is a list of acceptable compostable items for our community compost program:

Unlike home composting, High Country Compost accepts all food scraps, soiled paper, and yard trimmings.

Food Scraps

(anything that used to be alive)

- Baked Goods
- Bones
- Bread and grains
- Cereal
- Cheese
- Coffee grounds
- Dairy products
- Eggs and eggshells
- Fish
- Fruit (pits too and peels)
- Gravy and sauces
- Leftovers and spoiled food
- Meat (including bones)
- Nuts
- Pasta
- Peanut Butter
- Processed foods
- Rice
- Salads
- Seafood (including shellfish)
- Vegetables

Soiled Paper

- Coffee filters
- Facial tissue
- Greasy pizza boxes
- Paper cups and plates
- Paper ice cream containers
- Paper bags, napkins, tissues and towels
- Paper take-out boxes and containers
- Paper tea bags
- Waxy paper milk cartons (no foil liner)
- Wax paper
- Neon paper

Other

- Cutlery clearly labeled "Compostable"
- Plastic clearly labeled "Compostable"
- Waxed cardboard and paper
- Cooking oil

Examples of Acceptable Compostable Products by Brand and Product Type

Most compostable products are labeled biodegradable or compostable on the package or product. To be sure if it is compostable, you can visit www.bpiworld.org and enter your brand into the database.

Compostable Cups: *Compostable cups look like plastic cups except they have a "#7 PLA" and/or "compostable" label (some have a green stripe) on the bottom or side of the cup.*

Bare by Solo
Eco-Products Compostable cold and hot cups
Dixie EcoSmart PLA paper cups
Ecotainer compostable paper cups
World Art PLA Coated Eco Paper Cups by NatureWorks

Compostable Plates, Boats, and Bowls: *All plates and bowls must be uncoated (non-plastic lined). Most uncoated paper plates and bowls are OK for the compost program.*

Bare by Solo
Solo Budgetware Uncoated Paper Plates
Eco-products Tree Free Plates and Bowls
Sustainable Earth Paper Plates
Nature Friendly Paper Plates
AJM White Paper Plates Green Label (uncoated)
Green Wave biodegradable plates
Dixie Paper Plates Uncoated White Economy
World Art Paper 8 oz. Soup Container by NatureWorks

Compostable Tester Cups: *Tester cups must have a "compostable" label. Wax-lined paper cups are OK for the compost program.*

Royal Lace Paper Nut Cups
Kegworks Condiment Portion Paper Cups
Solo Paper Souffle Cups
Dixie Wax Treated Paper Cold Cups
4 oz FSC Paper Compostable Espresso Cups

Compostable Utensils: *All wood, bamboo, and corn-based or compostable cutlery is OK for compost program. Please be sure you are buying compostable and not plastic as both look identical.*

Biodegradable flat wooden tasting spoons
Popsicle sticks (uncoated)
Wooden or bamboo skewers
Eco-Products High Heat Compostable Cutlery
Birchware compostable wooden cutlery
Toothpicks (wood or bamboo only)

Compostable Napkins, Wax Paper, and Paper Towels: *All paper napkins, wax paper, and paper towels are OK for compost program.*

Compostable To-Go Ware: *All unlined (no plastic lining) paper to-go boxes are OK for compost program. Please, NO Styrofoam or plastic lined (Chinese food) containers. Foil is OK for recycling.*

Sugarcane Clamshell Take-Out Containers
World Centric Wheat Straw Compostable Take Out Clamshells
Green Wave Take Out Containers (Sugar Cane and Bamboo)