

Burying Food Scraps

Select a spot

Food waste can be buried in empty spots in vegetable and flower gardens, or in holes dug around the drip line of trees and shrubs. The drip line is below the ends of branches, where feeder roots are connected.

Dig a hole

Use a shovel or post hole digger to make a hole at least a foot deep.

Add food scraps

Add 3 to 4 inches of food scraps at the bottom of the hole. Use a shovel to chop and mix the wastes into the soil to speed composting.

Cover with soil

Cover food scraps with at least 8 inches of soil to prevent rodents and pets from digging them up.

Plant

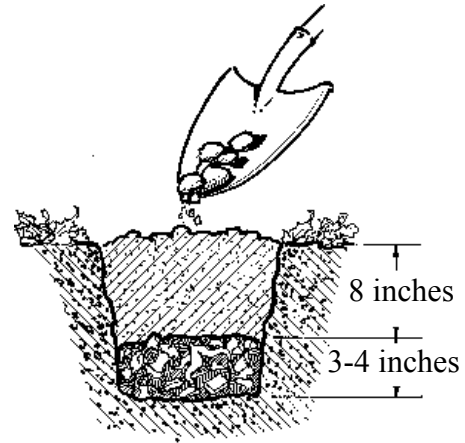
Buried food scraps may take from two to six months to decompose, depending on soil temperature, moisture, worm population and what is buried. In good garden soil, leafy greens will break down in weeks while citrus peels may persist for several months. If the soil is loose and fertile, annual plants may be planted on top of burial areas immediately. If the soil requires tilling before planting, wait a month or more, then check burial areas before tilling to make sure that undecomposed food does not come to the surface.

Do Bury

- Vegetable scraps
- Grains and pasta
- Fruit rinds and peels
- Breads and cereals
- Coffee grounds and filters
- Tea bags
- Egg shells
- Paper napkins

Do Not Bury

- Meat
- Fish and poultry
- Cheese
- Oily foods
- Butter
- Other animal products



Learn more about composting
on-line at
www.compostsantacruzcounty.org



The Home Composting Program is sponsored by the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors and produced by the Santa Cruz County Department of Public Works Recycling and Solid Waste Services

