

Case Study

Kitchen Composter

Features and Benefits



- Allows all food waste including meat, dairy, fish and cooked food products to be composted
- Odour-free operation
- Compact counter-top container
- Natural process / Uses natural bran-based material with EM™ friendly bacteria
- Drip tap to allow liquid feed to be drained off, which can be used as nutritious plant food
- Can be mixed with traditional compost
- Treated material can be placed in a traditional compost bin

DIMENSIONS

Capacity (ltrs)	18
Width (mm)	320
Depth (mm)	260
Height (mm)	370



DONCASTER
Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council

Greener Gardens and Less Waste for Doncaster

During the summer of 2006, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council expanded its green waste initiative to collect more Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) from householders in order to help meet its LATS (Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme) targets.

Background

Following a successful pilot scheme, which introduced a green 240 litre wheeled bin to householders for the collection of garden waste from 10,000 homes in the area, Doncaster chose to roll out this system across the borough. An alternate weekly collection service for general refuse was also introduced. Lee Hobson, Resource Recovery Theme Lead Officer at Doncaster said, "Following the LATS Regulations, we thought it was essential to start looking for ways to reduce the amount of BMW we were sending to landfill. Collecting garden waste was the first logical step".

Kitchen Composter system

Doncaster MBC anticipated that some residents might be concerned about problems arising from leaving food waste in their refuse bin for up to two weeks, specifically odour problems. To help alleviate these concerns, Doncaster MBC provided residents with the option of a free Straight Kitchen Composter allowing food waste to be safely composted at home rather than putting it in the refuse bin. The Kitchen Composter was developed by Straight to allow all food waste including meat, fish, dairy and all cooked foods, to be composted at home in a standard home compost bin. The system utilises a natural bran-based activator called Bokashi, which is coated in a friendly bacteria like those found in probiotic yoghurt. Food waste is placed in the counter-top composter and a handful of Bokashi is added. Once the tight-fitting lid is replaced the Bokashi starts a fermentation process off and removes any odours that may have been present in the food. Once broken down, the contents of the 18 litre Kitchen Composter can be safely placed in a traditional compost bin without attracting vermin.

Doncaster MBC has been offering traditional home compost bins to residents for a number of years and has sold several thousand to date. To take 100% of food waste out of the waste bin, it is recommended that Kitchen Composters are used in pairs. Once a container is full it requires a period of two weeks to allow for the pre-composting process to get underway. The second bin can be filled during this time.

Offer Details and Participation Rates

Straight supplied **6,000** Kitchen Composter kits to Doncaster MBC who delivered them directly to the residents. They were supplied as double kits on an opt-in basis. All were snapped up within **9 months** of the scheme starting. Ms Hobson says "The Kitchen Composters have proved very popular with residents so we decided to order another **3,000** double kits whilst we were still rolling out the green waste scheme". Residents were made aware of the availability of the Kitchen Composters through Doncaster's council newspaper, the Doncaster News. The publication goes out monthly to all **129,000** households. The Kitchen Composters were also taken along to all environment events held over the summer period. Feedback from residents shows that the Kitchen Composter system is a hit and the system has proved easy to use with residents continuing to use their units.

Resident Feedback

"Just a quick note to say I am thrilled to bits with my Kitchen Composter. I can't believe what a difference it has made to the rubbish bin."

"Just to say that I would not be without my little Kitchen Composter bin, it sits under my sink and gratefully accepts all that I put into it! I thought at first that it might smell a bit, but no it is a wonderful addition to my recycling....."

"I received my Kitchen Composter about three months ago. I love it! I've filled it a couple of times and transferred it to my regular composter. The "juice" makes an excellent fertilizer and the honeysuckle plants I planted late in the season have just SHOT UP growing over 6 ft in just two and a half months. Thank you sooo much".



Summary



The recycling rate for Doncaster MBC at the year end of 2005/06 was **19.6%**, with a target of **25%** for 2007/08. Its green bin scheme along with its green box scheme for dry recyclables should make a successful contribution towards meeting this target. Lee Hobson commented "Now that all **129,000** households are on alternate weekly collections, we believe that in the coming years, we will push our rates much higher than **25%** and the investment now will reap rewards in the future".

An initial trial of the Kitchen Composter system was undertaken by residents in East Sussex County and the results are available upon request.