

Be a compost champion this spring

THIS spring, the National Market Traders' Federation will be launching its third annual 'How Green is your Market' competition and as ever is encouraging traders to get involved by showcasing the great work they are doing to be green.

This year, to provide an added boost to the competition, we are pleased to be partnering with Recycle Now's Home Composting campaign to encourage members to develop their own green fingers and give composting a go, as well as passing on the word to customers.

A staggering one third of a household's waste can be composted at home – including garden waste, tea bags, egg shells, fruit and vegetable peelings, and much more. When organic waste is sent to landfill it gets buried under other waste and decomposes without oxygen, producing a powerful greenhouse gas, methane. However, when the same waste is composted, it breaks down with oxygen and no methane is emitted. What's more, composting at home produces a rich and nutritious plant food to help the garden thrive.

Entries received to the How Green is your Market competition over the past years have proven that market traders are already making great strides towards being more environmentally aware. Recycle Now is keen to work with the NMTF, so that the enthusiasm of market traders in this subject matter, can be used to pass on messages about home composting to the many customers that pass through UK markets each year. Not only will getting involved in the Recycle Now campaign help the environment, it is also a great opportunity for traders and operators to showcase the work they are already doing and to generate some positive publicity for the market.

Doreen McIntyre from Recycle Now said: "Market Traders are the ideal ambassadors to pass on the word about composting to customers. We know that many markets are already running fantastic green initiatives, and we simply want to raise awareness of composting as one of the many simple ways to reduce the impact of waste on landfill sites. We hope that traders and market operators will look out for information in the spring and will get behind this new drive."

Joe Harrison, Chief Executive Officer of the National Market Traders Federation said: "The 'How Green is your Market' competition was started to encourage markets and traders to become more environmentally friendly. Through working with Recycle Now's Home Composting campaign, we have a new dimension to the competition, which is to look at reducing the

amount of unavoidable food waste which is currently ending up at landfill. Around a third of us currently compost at home, but there is still more that could be done, which is why the NMTF is supporting the campaign."

How can traders get involved?

Be a compost ambassador

In early spring, markets up and down the country will be invited to take part in the campaign to get more people composting. Recycle Now will be providing traders with expert advice and tips to help them become real compost champions in their area by talking to their customers about composting at home. Traders will receive:

- **Tips** on what can and can't be composted, to help them advise customers on how to get started.
- **Advice** on reducing food waste in the first place, which can be given to customers to help them make the most of the food they buy
- **Suggestions** on how to work with Recycle Now locally, to promote home composting and their own green initiatives.
- **Guidance** on how to publicise green initiatives and your market through local media

Get composting on your market!

Market traders running fruit and vegetable stalls know only too well that food waste can be a huge issue.

Composting is one way for traders to get rid of this unavoidable food waste and turn it into something useful.

Traders or operators wishing to find out more about composting on a commercial scale should contact their local council to discuss how they can take the idea forward.

Any markets already operating such schemes are encouraged to share their experiences with Recycle Now and the NMTF.

We want to hear from you!

Recycle Now's Home Composting campaign and the NMTF are looking for traders who have already started composting – whether at home or at work - to help promote the campaign. The most outstanding composters will be featured in promotional materials and it will be a great way to publicise your stall, market and composting in general!

Please contact Recycle Now with details of your composting experiences, by emailing james.gilheany@fishburnhedges.co.uk, or writing to Recycle Now Home Composting campaign, c/o Fishburn Hedges, 77 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SR. All stories received will be entered in a competition, and the best compost champion will win a compost bin and accessories to use at home.

Boost your entry in the How Green is Your Market competition!

Traders and operators wishing to enter the How Green is Your Market competition can use their involvement in the Recycle Now composting campaign to boost their entry. For example:

- Demonstrate how you are helping customers to be green, as evidence of what you are doing to be a greener trader.
- Why not approach your local council about holding a composting "teach in" session or information giveaway at the local market?
- If your market doesn't currently compost, why not be proactive in asking your operator or local council about services available?

More information about the How Green is Your Market competition 2010 will be available soon at www.howgreenisyourmarket.com

The NMTF joins forces with Recycle Now's Home Composting campaign to encourage traders to pass on the composting word



Start composting at home

Traders who are interested in composting at home themselves can take a look at Recycle Now's tips and hints which will get you well on your way.

1: Heap or bin? A compost heap is perhaps one of the most traditional methods for composting, however compost bins can be easier, and tidier to manage. There are now many widely available compost bins, which are simple to purchase, construct and use.

2: What type of bin is for me? There are compost bins of all shapes and sizes, so no matter the size of the unavoidable food waste you produce, there is a bin for you. Your best bet for finding a large bin is contacting your local authority or a local garden centre.

3: Getting started: Simply add a selection of 'greens and browns' to the bin for the perfect mix. 'Greens' are quick to rot and provide important nitrogen and moisture – try tea bags, vegetable peelings, old flowers and nettles, or spent bedding plants. 'Browns' such as cardboard, fallen leaves, twigs and branches are slower to rot, but provide carbon and fibre to the bin.

4: The end product: After nine months to a year your compost will be mature enough to use. You'll know it's ready when the compost has turned into a dark, crumbly soil-like substance. It can be used to enrich borders and plants. If you have little use for compost, consider using a wormery as this will produce less compost but plenty of plant food.

Visit www.recyclenow.com/compost for more information on how you can get started.



More information soon

Further details of the How Green is Your Market competition and the Recycle Now Home Composting campaign will be available soon. In the meantime, if you want to find out more about the Home Composting campaign, then check out their website for all the details: <http://www.recyclenow.com/compost/>

Just what can I compost?

Making good compost is all about getting the 'mix' right. A 50/50 blend of 'Greens and 'Browns' is needed to make the perfect compost. Here's a quick guide to what goes in and what stays out!

| Greens | Browns | Keep them out! |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| Tea bags | Cardboard | Meat |
| Grass cutting | Egg boxes | Cooked vegetables |
| Vegetable peelings, salad leaves and fruit scraps | Scrunched up paper | Dairy products |
| Old flowers and nettles | Fallen leaves | Diseased plants |
| Coffee grounds and filter paper | Sawdust | Dog poo or cat litter |
| Spent bedding plants | Twigs, branches and bark | Nappies |
| Rhubarb leaves | | Perennial weeds or weeds with seed heads |
| Young annual weeds (e.g. chickweed) | | |