

News at IUPUI

CAMPUS LIFE

Tons of food waste diverted from landfill thanks to new IUPUI initiative

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A look inside one of the Campus Center's compost bins reveals pre-consumer food waste like melon rinds, strawberry tops and rotten peppers. *Photo by Tim Brouk, Indiana University*

The Campus Center produces about two tons of food waste most months.

That's just pre-consumer waste -- the strawberry tops, melon rinds, rotten green peppers and coffee grounds that never leave the kitchens add up at IUPUI's popular lunch destination. Much of the extra post-consumer food gets repurposed in programs like the Campus Kitchen <<https://sustainability.iupui.edu/topics/campus-kitchen.asp>> at IUPUI.

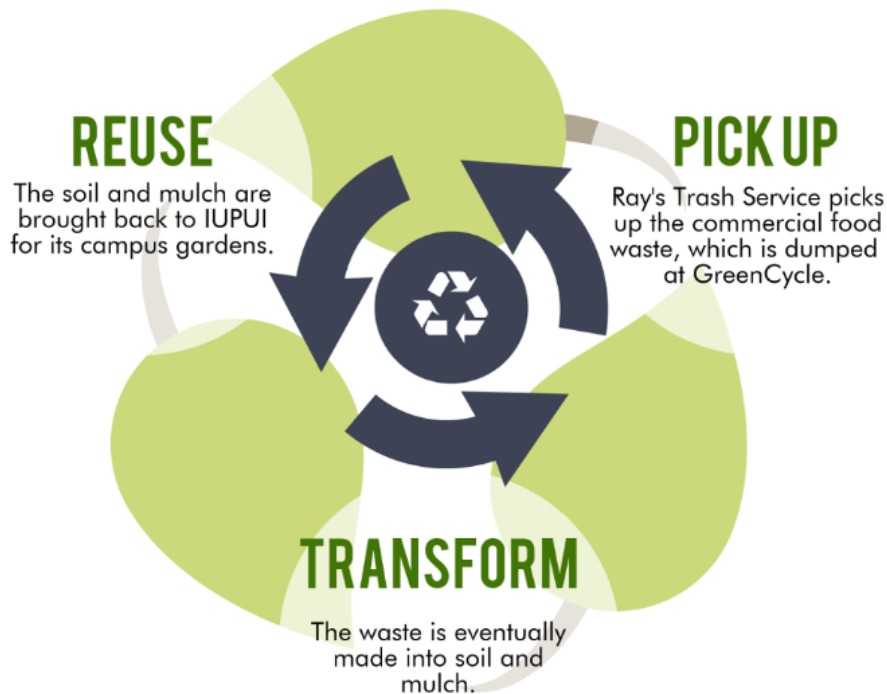
Still, the Office of Sustainability <<https://sustainability.iupui.edu/>> saw a need to keep the massive amounts of food waste out of the landfill. Since March, the Campus Center has been working with Ray's Trash Service <<https://raystrash.com/>> and GreenCycle <<https://greencycleindy.com/>> to haul the food waste and turn it into compost, mulch and soil.

"We then buy back the mulch and soil for our campus gardens <<https://sustainability.iupui.edu/topics/food.asp>>," said Jessica Davis, Office of Sustainability director. "It's a closed cycle."

STAYING GREEN

In fall 2016, Butler and IUPUI co-applied for a \$50,000 grant for a commercial food waste pickup route, which is used to build the program and cover the cost of green bins and new dumpsters at the Campus Center.

HOW IT WORKS



FACTS



The Campus Center composts three 32-gallon bags of coffee grounds per day.



The Campus Center food waste dumpster gets 3/4 full every week, which equals 1.5-2 tons of food waste monthly.



Tower Dining's food waste is collected twice a week from three 32-gallon bins, which are usually full.

The Campus Center has been composting to help fight food waste since March. [An accessible version of this graphic <https://news.iu.edu/doc/staying-green-graphic-transcript.pdf>](https://news.iu.edu/doc/staying-green-graphic-transcript.pdf) is available online. *Image by Samantha Thompson, Indiana University*

In fall 2016, IUPUI and Butler University co-applied for a \$50,000 grant <<http://archive.news.iupui.edu/releases/2016/10/iupui-butler-win-sustainability-prize.shtml>> for a commercial food waste pickup route. The funds were used to build the program and cover the costs of new green bins for food waste, a new dumpster at the Campus Center and recruiting new participants.

Every Campus Center outlet has one green food waste bin. Chartwells <<https://iupui.catertrax.com/>> catering has three, which equals to about a dozen bins in use in the Campus Center during the day. Catering fills its bins two or three times a day. The 32-gallon bins are never filled all the way due to weight.; Chartwells catering executive chef Mike Minch estimates they are always about three-fourths full before getting emptied.

Davis said the cost of Ray's coming to the Campus Center once a week to empty the new food waste dumpster has gone down thanks to the Office of Sustainability's efforts and collaboration with Butler. The programs recently added Ivy Tech and Marian University to help share costs. Indianapolis Public Schools and hospitals like Eskenazi have expressed interest in joining as well.

"We're targeting big food waste producers," Davis explained.

The composting initiative is another recycling initiative that requires Chartwells staff to think before throwing away. Minch said his staff have embraced past initiatives and are diligently making sure those rotten bananas end up in a green bin.

"I think it's a great idea," Minch said. "The hardest thing is just putting it into practice. In busy times, everyone wants to throw everything in the same bin."

Tower Dining <<https://www.dineoncampus.com/iupui/whats-on-the-menu>> has joined the food waste battle. While there is no room for a large dumpster in the building's loading docks, the dining hall has three 64-gallon totes <https://www.webstaurantstore.com/rubbermaid-fg9w2773blue-brute-50-gallon-blue-recycling-rollout-container-with-lid/690FG9W2773B.html?utm_source=Google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=GoogleShopping&gclid=EAlalQobChMI9POpy6yx3glVTLnACh2LowwzEAQYAIAABEgKK6> that get collected twice a week by Green with Indy <<https://www.greenwithindy.com/>> . The receptacles are usually full when they're collected.

"As long as it's edible, it goes to Campus Kitchen," Davis said. "If it's not edible, it should end up in a compost bin."

Sustainability quick hits

Planting for IUPUI's 50th

In collaboration with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful <<https://www.kibi.org/>> , the Office of Sustainability will plant 35 trees from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday, Nov. 3 <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSezhOkizi_z-oct7xcGH1KtyDNGfycW6nUZ79CW7m78oUnAw/viewform> , outside of the Gateway Garage near Michigan and Blackford streets. Another 15 trees will be planted in April to help commemorate IUPUI's 50th anniversary <<https://50.iupui.edu/>> .

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week events

The Office of Sustainability, Office for Veterans and Military Personnel, Chartwells, and Student Advocacy and Support are teaming up during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, Nov. 12-16, for multiple events:

- Kickoff event with Indianapolis homelessness advocate Maurice Young <<https://indianapolishomelessnessmuseumonline.wordpress.com/2017/03/13/maurice-young-homeless-advocate/>> and Young Actors Theater <<http://www.yatkids.org/>> , Nov. 12.
- Gather at the Table, a free community meal, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Nov. 13
- As part of the Million Meal Movement <<https://millionmealmovement.org/>> , the Office of Sustainability will pack 5,000 meals for Campus Kitchen and Paw's Pantry <<https://twitter.com/iupui pawspantry?lang=en>> on Nov. 15 in the Campus Center Atrium. This initiative is fueled by an anonymous donation.
- Students will volunteer at local food pantries Nov. 16.

Food audit results

An October food audit in Tower Dining saw the smaller-plate initiative is creating less food waste, according to Deb Ferguson, the Office of Sustainability's assistant director.

There was a total of 670 pounds of food waste generated over the five-day audit, which was only conducted over lunch hour. Food waste decreased as the week went on.

Ask for cutlery and bags

With the hope of reducing waste, customers will now have to request cutlery and to-go bags in the Campus Center food court.

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2 [IU Bloomington staff, faculty, students encouraged to attend annual health and benefits fair
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