

COMPOST COMMITTEE REPORT: NEW COMPOST ON THE BLOCK

April 22, 2025



April 22, 2025

By Mark Hellermann for the Compost Committee

The Coop generates upwards of 23 tons of food scraps each year. About a third of this gets composted at nine local sites in Brooklyn by members who are part of the PSFC Compost Squad. One of these community sites is just down the street at Union and 4th Ave—GreenSpace on 4th (GS4). A few weeks ago the Coop started offering this compost for sale. The sifted compost from GS4 is sold in repurposed paper coffee filter bags from a coffee shop in Windsor Terrace. All of the bags have unique brown stains (not unlike the packaging on the legendary Powdermilk Biscuits).

Compost inside the bag is made from fruit and vegetable scraps collected at the Coop and from CHIPS soup kitchen. Sources of carbon (aka “browns”) are wood chips from Greenwood Cemetery, wood shavings from a few Gowanus carpenters, leaves, coffee grounds and small amounts of cocoa chaff. No animal products are used in the making of this product. Except for the delivery of browns every few weeks, these materials arrive at GS4 via people-powered U-Boats. Most production does not rely on burning fossil fuels. You could say this is an ultra-local product that completes a full circle between Coop food scraps and Coop member gardens. (Someone actually did say that.)

Staff at the Coop (especially Cecelia Rembert and Joe Gordon) have been very supportive about getting this compost on the shelves so it can find its way into your flower and vegetable beds.

Food scraps not composted at community gardens get picked up by a commercial hauler known as Mr. T, which processes it into bioenergy in New Jersey. Coop members are making a concerted effort to increase local composting and to minimize the amount of food scraps being carted out of state and made into biogas and biosolids.

If you are interested in helping us process more of this nutrient-rich black gold, consider joining the Compost Squad. There are several openings and they are posted on the bulletin board by the elevator and also listed in “Join the Compost Committee” in this edition of the *Linewaiters’ Gazette*. Or you can contact psfccompost@gmail.com.

For more information on GS4 Compost, visit greenspaceon4th.org.

JOIN THE COMPOST COMMITTEE

April 22, 2025



April 22, 2025

The Compost Committee is looking for several members who want to be part of this amazing squad that processes and composts eight tons of food scraps from the Coop annually at nine sites around Brooklyn. If you would like to get physical with fruit and vegetable scraps, work outdoors in beautiful gardens, and get your hands dirty, then look into the Compost Committee. (Disclaimer: Okay, it's not always beautiful—because it is physical, outdoor work it can at times be cold, snowy or rainy—but it is always invigorating and satisfying!)

If you are reliable and can commit to a regular but flexible shift (regular day, flexible time), contact psfccompost@gmail.com.

The following shifts are available:

HAULING:

2 slots available for a very odd duck job (single person slots):

Every third Saturday, haul one brown bin of food scraps from CHIPS to GreenSpace on 4th Ave (GS4) between Union and Sackett. CHIPS is a soup kitchen across the street. Specifics: pick up a brown bin full of organic scraps, roll it across the street to GS4. Chop up the scraps and shovel them into a compost bin. Add wood shavings, mix and turn the material in the bin. This shift takes about 1 hour and 15 minutes. You will be doing this shift twice in the 6-week work cycle. No vehicle needed.

9 slots available for hauling buckets of food scraps to local gardens (preferably two person teams but solo works as well):

Haul buckets of food scraps from the Coop to designated sites around Brooklyn (some sites are walkable, some will need a vehicle). You will haul on your designated day, but when you work on that day is entirely up to you. Specifics: Pick up 6–12 buckets of food scraps from the Coop and haul them to your designated garden. Chop and mix scraps with wood shavings and put into compost bins. Rinse out buckets and return them to the Coop. Make sure bucket area in the back of the Coop is in good shape. Teams haul six buckets per person. Six-week cycle.

BROWNS Delivery:

2 slots available for delivering wood shavings to various gardens (one or two person teams).

The gardens cannot compost the vegetable scraps without a carbon source. This comes in the form of wood chips gathered from Greenwood Cemetery or wood shavings gathered from various wood shops around Brooklyn. Specifics: Gather bags of wood shavings from various sites around Brooklyn (Industry City, Brooklyn Army Terminal, and other sites) and deliver them to various gardens as needed. This is generally once or twice per 6-week cycle depending on team size, availability of wood shavings and need of the gardens. These shifts offer a lot of flexibility—you are assigned a

week and can work anytime during that week. Vehicle needed.

TURNERS:

1 or 2 Slots available for one or two person teams.

Specifics: Follow the directions given at your assigned garden. Usually emptying one or two compost bins, aerating other bins and preparing emptied bins for receiving new buckets of food scraps. 6-week cycle. No vehicle needed.