



## CIC's Christmas Decalogue on food waste

Families join around the dining-table at Christmas and New-year. Therefore supermarkets register an increase of selling of food products compared to other periods of the year. But during Christmas-time also MSW production increases, especially food waste, even if part of it contains still edible food and products. Recent estimation indicate that approximately 1.3 billion tonnes of food is lost or wasted annually; within the EU27 approximately 90 million tonnes of food waste are generated annually, equivalent to 180kg per person. Food wastage could be reduced by not overfilling the shopping cart, but also by paying attention to what is thrown into the biobin. Therefore CIC, the Italian Composting and Biogas Consortium, compiled a Decalogue for an effective separate collection of foodwaste, without wastage:

1. **Preventing is better than recycling:** how much food do you effectively need, when shopping for Christmas or New-year dinner? Read the prescription for food storage and – most important – the expiry date. “Best before” means that the food is still edible some days after the best-before-date and eating it won't cause any bellyache.
2. **A real donation:** In Italy (but also in other countries) projects for food donation have been established, involving the retail and restaurant sector, in cooperation with not-for-profit groups and social organisation. Search for the initiatives running in your municipality and see if you can donate your excess packed food or sustain single initiatives economically. If you're organising parties or dinners with a large number of participants you may donate also part of the cooked food.
3. **Collect food waste correctly:** separate collection of food waste, including both crude and cooked food scraps, is part of everyday live for millions of Italians. But collection needs to be clean so to recycle organics into biogas (a renewable fuel) and into compost (an organic fertilizer). Hence do not mix food waste with any plastic, glass or metal item.
4. **What can go into the kitchen caddy?** Everything you can eat! Collect all types of food scraps, both of vegetal and animal origin, produced during meals preparation. You can also collect all scraps from the plates and from the table (all you could not eat).
5. **Use the right bag:** Do you feed your pet with plastics? You probably don't. Plastics cannot be “digested” by those microorganism that naturally transform organics into compost; therefore it kitchen-caddies are to be used only with paper or bioplastics liners, being compostable according to the EU-standard 13432.
6. **If you're not doing the washing up:** one-way compostable dishes (i.e. plates, glasses, cutlery) certified according the EN-standard 13432 can be used for reducing residual waste production; these dishes are recycled together with food waste, in industrial composting sites. Please check with you waste authority or collection company that commingled collection of compostable dishes and food waste is admitted.
7. **Look at the calendar of collection:** Christmas mean holidays and vacation also for the waste operators which collect and recycle your waste. If collection is done at the curbside, check the collection days in your municipality, since on the 25<sup>th</sup> December and on New-year's day collection rounds may be suspended.
8. **The Christmas tree:** if you bought a rootless tree, after Christmas bring it to your Civic Amenity Site; it will end in a composting plant, bringing back its “vital” energy to soils in form of compost.
9. **Compost:** transforming organic waste into compost contributes to a more sustainable use of natural resources. Composting produces a natural fertilizer which brings back organic matter into our soils.
10. **CIC's certification labels:** The Italian Composting and Biogas consortium goes for quality assurance: therefore it has created two quality labels, one for compost and the other for compostable items. Choosing a quality-certified compost or items certified by “Compostabile CIC” means choosing quality products for a smaller footprint and safer environmental.

***C.I.C. wishes you a merry Christmas and  
a successful and sustainable New Year!***