



# FOGO Update

SEPTEMBER 2022

## How have we processed the product?

Every week FOGO bins have been collected by Council's contractor and taken to the Gatton waste facility. Here it has been placed on a static aerated composting system for processing over 9-12 weeks.

The pile is then screened for contamination and the result is amazing soil conditioner!



## Extension of the FOGO trial

Council would like to thank residents for participating in the FOGO trial in selected areas of Laidley and Gatton. Over the past 12 months, the FOGO trial has been successful in reducing waste to landfill by diverting 385.57 tonnes of food and organic waste via the green bin collection. Council has received amazing feedback from trial participants who have welcomed the FOGO bin, highlighting that the trial has provided a sustainable solution by establishing a circular economy for waste generated in the Lockyer Valley.

Council has resolved to extend the trial at no cost to residents in the trial areas for the next 12 months, to further trial this solution to address the growing problem of the Gatton landfill reaching capacity.

## FOGO Product Screening

In September 2022, the FOGO product was screened to 10mm to produce an amazing FOGO soil conditioner.

This batch will be utilised in public community spaces over the upcoming months, so stay tuned to Council's social media and website for more information.



# 385.57



tonnes of organic waste diverted from landfill

## Contamination

The State Government required audit reporting of contamination by external auditors as part of the FOGO trial. Council is pleased to report contamination was recorded at a mere 3.52%. Council aims to produce a product that is compliant with Australian Standards for Composts (AS4454).

Pantry items such as bagged bread and packaged food were the leading cause of contamination in the FOGO bin.

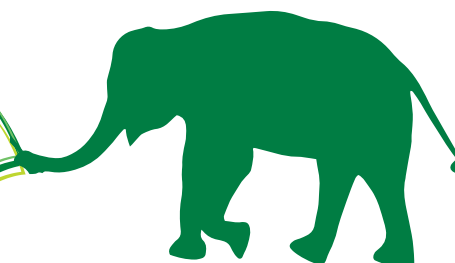
Remember, food can go nude in the FOGO bin!



## What have we done with the end product?

One of the big questions from residents during the trial was: What will Council do with the end product? This has been explored throughout the trial in a number of different applications, including tree planting days/events and placement in local community gardens such as the Laidley Pioneer Village.

Did you know  
385 tonnes of the  
FOGO is equivalent to  
**77 elephants**



# FOGO

## Educating our children about FOGO

Cr Cook attended Gatton State School in July to officiate their first 'FOGO flip' for the waste warrior program, which has been introduced as part of the FOGO trial at Gatton State School and Lockyer Valley Early Education Centre. When the children were asked why they wanted to be a part of the waste warrior program, one student from Gatton State School stated:

*"I would love to become a waste warrior because I care about the environment, and I want the earth to become a non-waste planet. I want people to care about the environment as much as I do."*



## LOVE food HATE waste top tips

Organic materials make up about half of what Queenslanders throw out each week. That adds up! It's estimated Australian households spend between \$2000 - \$2500 per year on food that is wasted. With the cost of living on the rise, Council urges residents to have a closer look at how they can reduce food waste and save money using the following tips:

**Meal Plan** - regular meal planning can assist residents in reducing how much they throw away each week!

**Buy Better** - regularly check what's in the fridge, freezer and pantry before you go food shopping. Shopping with a list, and planning portions can greatly reduce the amount of food waste generated in your home, and also saves you money at the checkout!

### TAKE THE FOOD WASTE CHALLENGE!



#### Love your leftovers

Create a shelf of your fridge or pantry for your leftovers or other food that needs to be eaten. Get everyone in the household to use food on this shelf first or rotate food by moving the oldest items to the front. Make it failproof by using transparent containers to easily see what's inside.



#### Storing food for freshness

Freeze some leftovers, fruits, vegetables, or even an entire meal. Who doesn't love coming home to a ready-made home cooked meal and taking a night off cooking! Don't forget to label your frozen goods, including the date when it was frozen.

### What bags can I use in my caddy?



**Remember:** everything that goes into the FOGO bin is used on public spaces such as parks and gardens... keep plastic out!

### Is it really compostable?

The Australian Government has set targets to make all packaging recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025, which means more and more retailers are using packaging marked 'compostable', 'home compostable' or 'biodegradable' - but are you wondering what the difference is? The terms aren't interchangeable, and it is important to understand what they mean if you want to make an informed choice and avoid greenwashing. On the surface, biodegradable, compostable and home compostable packaging sound similar, but the differences mean a lot for the sustainable future of the Lockyer Valley.

Council's FOGO bin can only accept liners that are compostable and have the AS4736 label, because they will break down in our composting system which reaches high temperatures of 55+ degrees. So check liners have the AS4736 leaf printed to make sure we get it right!

# FOGO

## FOGO waste audit findings

Council engaged an external contractor to undertake an audit of the FOGO waste bin. The audit found households within the trial are using their FOGO bins for acceptable food such as kitchen scraps, but may not be as willing to empty containers of food into their FOGO bins prior to disposing of the container. This is often due to the 'yuck factor' of emptying food past the use by date. It could also be the volume of the caddy or container being used for FOGO materials in the kitchen is not sufficiently big for a pantry or fridge clean-out, and these items end up in the general waste bin instead. The audit recommended continuing education on the importance of diverting organic materials from landfill, and that this could assist some residents in overcoming the barrier of emptying food out of its container, and disposing of it in the FOGO bin instead.

Acceptable food materials represented approximately

# 11.41%

of the FOGO stream.



Acceptable garden materials made up

# 86.52%

of the materials within the FOGO stream.



This suggests residents are aware garden materials are acceptable in their FOGO bin. There has been a significant amount of rainfall recently, which could have resulted in more green waste being disposed of than usual.



## What To Compost



Vegetables



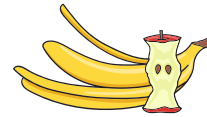
Houseplants



Yard trimmings



Coffee, tea



Fruits



Nut shells



Eggshells



Paper napkins



Paper scraps



# FOGO



## Top tips for the FOGO bin

### Say NO to plastic in the FOGO bin!

1. Remove plastic from your bread before placing it in the FOGO bin.
2. Place green waste in the FOGO bin without a bag. To ensure your bin doesn't get 'plugged,' you can simply place loose small sticks or palm fronds in the bottom to allow air under your grass clippings.

## Lake Apex Planting Day

It was a stunning winter's day at Lake Apex, Gatton on 28 July as Council celebrated National Tree Day by planting a batch of saplings utilising the magnificent community-generated Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) compost.

These beauties will not only grow to provide shade and important homes for our wildlife but will help clean the air we breathe utilising the soil conditioner produced from the trial!

Friends of Lake Apex were in attendance to celebrate this great circular economy initiative, which will assist in creating a sustainable future for the Lockyer Valley by reusing community generated waste in community parks such as Lake Apex.



## Narda Lagoon Planting Day

Lockyer Valley Deputy Mayor and Waste Portfolio Councillor Jason Cook invited the community to come along and see first-hand how FOGO compost was used at Lions Park, Narda Lagoon on Wednesday 2 March 2022.



**HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE FOGO TRIAL?**

Filling out the attached survey will assist Council in understanding how residents feel about the FOGO trial and the outcomes achieved so far.