

Fine wine from table scraps

Where do all the table scraps in restaurants go? In some cases they are now turned in to wine, like spinning straw into gold.

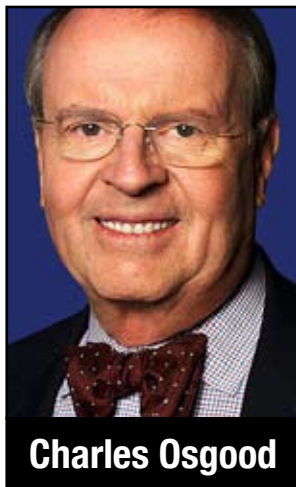
Some restaurants in San Francisco are composting leftovers into nutrient-dense soil for wine grapes.

GREEN: "This is the compacter to throw our solid waste in."

Mike Green, manager of the Pacific Dining Car in Los Angeles, has been composting up to 14 tons a month since 2004.

GREEN: "All the table scraps get composted, all the leaves from the trees that we trim outside the restaurant, all the heads of lettuce, egg shells...everything that's remotely organic can be composted."

Green sees a \$200 a month reduction in his garbage bill for participating in the program, but he says that's not why he does it.



Charles Osgood

GREEN: "We're happy to save the money on our trash bill, but we're doing it because it's good for the environment. It's as simple as that."

Bob Besso of Norcal Waste says he created San Francisco's composting program in 1999, when he was presented with a mandate to divert 75% of material headed to the city's landfills by the year 2010.

BESSO: "In San Francisco the single largest component of the waste stream

is food waste that's going to landfill. That's not necessary. We can compost that material."

2,000 of the city's restaurants compost, and the program has spread to Los Angeles and other cities.

Once the material is turned into a rich product called "Four Course Compost," it's distributed to high end vineyards. Linda Hale manages over 500 acres of grapes for farmers in northern California.

HALE: "What we're finding is by using this compost we are consistently giving them four to five tons to the acre, having an ultra-premium product and everyone's happy. It makes us feel good to know that we're using product that is then in turn made into a bottle of wine that somebody is drinking."

A votre sante.

Charles Osgood/CBS Radio

The Osgood Report