

Join the GROW Ecological Commission for a tour of

**Argonne**   
National Laboratory  
on Thursday, May 7 at 9:00 AM

**Limited to 25 participants. Sign up by April 17, 2026.**  
*First come, first served!*

To reserve your spot or learn more, email:  
[mnicolae@westchester-il.gov](mailto:mnicolae@westchester-il.gov)

## GREEN FACT OF THE MONTH

According to the EPA, “In the US, food is the most common material sent to landfills, comprising 24.1% of municipal solid waste. This solid waste in landfills are the third largest source of human-related methane emissions. When we compost organic materials (food and yard trimmings), we return nutrients and carbon to the soil and support plant growth.” December 12, 2025

<https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/composting>

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Our food has so many beautiful pieces we don't always think about using. Before putting food scraps in the compost or waste pile, consider the many ways you can use them.

- Mix stale bread with oil and your favorite herbs and bake into croutons
- Try reviving limp greens or herbs by placing in cold water
- Zest lemons for a delightful burst of flavor in your dishes

- Infuse citrus peel in vinegar for a DIY cleaner or use rinds for cleaning kitchen sink/counters
- Chop up herb stems and cook into soup
- Sauté beet greens, swiss chard or broccoli stems, etc. Some even work well blended into pesto or sauces (see recipe below)
- Make stock with vegetable peels

Share your own tips for reducing food waste with us at [GROW@westchester-il.gov](mailto:GROW@westchester-il.gov), we'd love to hear it!

The pesto below can be served over pasta, on toasted bread, or dolloped into soups for added flavor.

### **Carrot Top Pesto**

#### **Ingredients**

- 1/3 cup toasted walnuts or pine nuts
- 1 small clove garlic
- 1 cup coarsely chopped carrot tops (preferably organic)
- big handful of basil leaves (about 1 cup)
- juice of 1/2 small lemon
- sea salt & freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 - 1/3 cup olive oil
- optional: pinch of red pepper flakes
- optional: 1 teaspoon capers
- optional: 1/4 parmesan cheese

#### **Instructions**

- In a food processor, pulse together the walnuts and garlic. Add the carrot tops, basil, lemon, salt & pepper. Pulse again, then add 1/4 cup olive oil and pulse until combined. (Make it as smooth or as chunky as you like).
- Scoop the pesto into a small bowl and stir in up to 1/4 cup more olive oil.
- Taste and adjust seasonings and stir in a pinch of red pepper flakes, capers, or parmesan cheese, if you like.

Source: [loveandlemons.com](http://loveandlemons.com)

Have a plant-based recipe you'd like to share with the community? Send it to [GROW@westchester-il.gov](mailto:GROW@westchester-il.gov) for consideration for future newsletters.