

What do you do with leftover pumpkins from Halloween?

by: [Kim Yonick](#) Posted: Nov 1, 2021 / 04:20 AM EDT Updated: Oct 28, 2021 / 09:47 PM EDT

(WFXR) — The candy has been handed out, the costumes are put away, and now you have to clean up the decorations — including the pumpkins.

What do you do with the leftover pumpkins?

Saving leftover pumpkin seeds



One option: supplying the pumpkin seeds to the [Southwest Virginia Wildlife Center](#). The center asks that you do not prepare the seeds with oil or salt. Instead, leave them plain.

According to the center, pumpkin seeds supply mammals and birds with lots of nutrients and too much salt or oil can harm their diets.

If you are interested in dropping off your pumpkin seeds, you can take them to 5985 Coleman Road in Roanoke between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. any day of

the week. You can also call the wildlife center at 540-798-9836.

Saving leftover pumpkins



Another option, donating your pumpkins to an animal farm or sanctuary.

[Pumpkins for Pigs](#) takes un-carved, non-inked/non-painted pumpkins and gives them to pumpkin-eating animals as treats. The organization also turns these pumpkins into compost.

The organization states that people are encouraged to donate their pumpkins between the months of October through mid-December. The website also states that when you go Christmas tree shopping, it is the best time to donate your pumpkins. You can find a full list of all the [farms and sanctuaries throughout Virginia on the Pumpkins for Pigs website](#).

Composting pumpkins

Before you throw your pumpkin in the trash, you might want to think of composting it instead. According to the [Sustainable America website](#), composting your pumpkin is as easy as five steps.

1. Remove candles, wax, aluminum foil, and other items from your pumpkin, along with leftover seeds that could potentially grow into new pumpkins.

Look for a shady spot in your garden and place the hollowed-out pumpkin there.

2. Grab a hammer and break it up. Smashing the pumpkin into smaller pieces allows for it to compost faster.
3. Grab leaves, sawdust, or wood chips and loosely cover the pumpkin pile. This helps protect the pumpkin from insects and pests while helping to air it out.
4. Let Mother Nature do her job. After a few weeks of waiting, your pumpkin will break down into nutrient-rich compost that can be used around the plants in your garden during the winter months.



(AP Photo/Dean Fosdick, FILE)

Composting has several benefits. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says that in 2011 an estimated 2 percent of all food waste was recovered for composting.

Those who compost help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In 2011, the EPA says almost 20.7 million tons of yard waste and food was composted, which saved more than 1.9 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

Another benefit to composting it helps to reduce global impacts and decrease emissions of methane.