Lessons Learned from Implementing the Food Recovery Hierarchy:

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Northeast Recycling Council
NERC.org
• **NERC** - 11 states united for environmentally sustainable materials management

• **The Project:** *Implementing Food Waste, Organics, & Manure Management in Rural Maryland Communities*

• USDA, RUS SWM Grant Program

• Partner Counties - Allegany & Cecil County
▪ Develop educational resources
▪ Provide minimum of 4 regional training sessions
▪ Onsite technical assistance in participant communities resulting in at least 5 sustainable projects
▪ Two national webinars
Where to Start

- Build partners
  - Government staff - county, town, district, planning commissions
  - AgExt, food policy councils
  - Rural associations, environmental orgs
  - Colleges, institutions, schools
Focus Frostburg
Allegany County Recycling Office

Compost Bin Sale!!
Saturday, April 21 from 9:30 am - 2:00 pm
at Constitution Park, Cumberland, MD

Celebrate Earth Day by learning how to compost yard trimmings and food scraps. Already composting yard trimmings? Come to our mini-workshop to learn how to safely & effectively add food scraps to your compost pile.

The Allegany County Recycling Office is offering Earth Machine compost bins to County residents at the discounted price of $20.56

Why compost?
• Composting converts yard trimmings, food scraps & other organics into a valuable soil amendment
• Using compost on plants and lawns reduces the need for fertilizer, other soil amendments, & pesticides

The bin sale will be held on Saturday, April 21 from 9:30 am – 2:00 pm at Constitution Park, Pavilion 1 (between the Amphitheater and Playground), Cumberland, Maryland
Cost per bin is $20.56. Payment can be made by credit card or cash. Pre-sale here: https://squareup.com/store/allegany-county-recycling

For more information call or email
301-777-5933, ext. 210 or recycling@alleganygov.org

FREE Compost Workshops & “Ask a Compost Expert”
Two compost workshops will be offered during the bin sale at:
• 10:30 am
• 1:00 pm

Compost ingredients, successful composting strategies, food waste composting, & more will be discussed.

Compost Expert, Athena Lee Bradley, with the Northeast Recycling Council will lead the workshop. She will also be available during the bin sale to answer your compost questions.
Lessons Learned

- Partner to carry-out educational/training events
- Utilize existing events: farmers markets, Earth Day activities, International Compost Week, AgExt (Master Gardener)
- Benefits of combining bin sales & “mini” food scrap composting workshops
Frostburg Grows
FG Community Compost Site
Open House
Food Scrap Compost Workshop
Farmer’s Market
Lessons Learned

- Lack of incentives, “can’t do this thinking,” low priority
- Food Councils/food insecurity
- “Mini” food scrap composting workshop
- Multi-faceted approach – outreach, informal/formal trainings, promote the hierarchy
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3rd Grade Lunch Food Scraps collection
Lessons Learned

- Concerns: real & perceived
- District vs. teachers
- Food waste audit
- Ongoing meetings
- Focus on the hierarchy
- Plan: lunch choice, waste free lunches, one lunch composting as pilot
Dining Hall Collection
NO

ONLY FOOD IN THE COLORFUL BUCKETS PLUS

NO
Deep Roots

Pallet Bin Construction
Compost lessons
Food Scraps Collection
Lessons Learned

- Institutions/schools present a perfect opportunity for food scrap diversion
  - ✓ Start small – prep scraps
  - ✓ Sustainability & garden tie-in
- Understand that staff are already overworked
Cecil County Fair AgDay
Lessons Learned

- Partner with AgExt & established events
- Farmers are busy
- Change is slow
- Agritourism & diversification present opportunities
Community Composting Project

- 6 States: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, & Vermont
- **Goal**: Create at least one sustainable community compost site in each state for managing food scraps & other organics
Community Composting Project

- Training course & multimedia training resources
- Remote, local & regional trainings
  - At least three onsite trainings
- Technical assistance & support
- Each site receives $1,000 for development
Community Composting

- Produces compost for local use
- Promotes community connections
- Builds resident food waste management awareness & participation
- Can play an essential role in the evolution of food scrap diversion
Community Composting, cont.

- Often volunteer run; some staffed
- Garden groups, neighborhoods, nonprofit organizations, public sector, farms, schools, other
- Range of sizes - 10 sq. ft. – 20,000 sq. ft.
- Range of compost systems
Community Garden Collection
System Considerations

Available materials
Community need/goals
People power/skills
Site capacity
Permit/regulatory limits
Resources available – funding, supplies, etc.

Charlotte Central School, Charlotte, VT; Red Hook Community Farm, Brooklyn, NY (photo credit NYC Master Composter Manual, DSNY)
Tumblers
Jora & Aerobin
Compost Bins
3-BIN SYSTEM

Photo Cr.: George McDonald, Maine DEP
Windrows

Images Cr.: David Hurd, GrowNYC
Aerated Static Piles

Images Cr.: David Hurd, GrowNYC
Ludlow, Vermont

- Hidden from public view
- Relatively isolated
- Limited winter access
Bennington, Vermont

• In town at Rec Center
• Nearby residents
• Highly visible
Montpelier, VT

- Highly visible
- In town neighborhood
- Nearby residents

Jora - Active Composting Step 1

Buffer area

Active Composting Step 2

Water
Fort Community, Burlington

Carbon Storage

Food scrap Tumbler

3-Bin System
Barre Town, VT

Senior citizen multi-family housing
Special Appreciation

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