

Organics Management Guide Submission

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Select the Primary Entity Type Please identify the category that best represents your project: Owner of Infrastructure** (composting, anaerobic digestion, depackaging, etc.)

Questions:

- 1. Background: Provide context for the program, project, or policy — why it was developed, when it began, and the problem or opportunity it addresses.**

Community Compost Company was started to reduce the amount of food that ends up in the waste stream and support soil health in local lands. We started our work with the city of Hoboken, NJ, in 2014. We approached Hoboken at a time when they were looking to grow into a greener city, and we were the only compost collection company in the area.

- 2. Summary: Briefly describe the initiative, including its goals, location, and primary outcomes.**

Our goal was to make composting easy and accessible to as many people as possible. We started a door-to-door collection service and set up drop spots around the city in public parks, as well as a couple in other heavily trafficked areas. (City Hall, Jackson St. Community Garden, Multi-service center, Elysian Park, Columbus Park, Harborside Park, etc.). Our door-to-door service allows people who may not be able to transport their food to a drop spot or people who simply don't have time to participate in the collection program. Additionally, by partnering with a city, we can provide our drop-spot programs to residents with not fee's or subscription costs. This allows us to reach more people around the city and make a difference in the community.

- 3. Percent of Overall Diverted Material: If available, include data or estimates on the portion of the community or organization's total diverted material no longer associated with the waste stream that this program or policy addresses.**

Since 2021, we have diverted over 100 tons of food scraps every year from the waste stream. That said, this only accounts for about 1% of the food that is being discarded every year.

- 4. Key Program Elements or Policy Provisions Describe the structure and main components of your program or policy. Explain the investments origins (who, how much). Please include as many of the following elements as applicable: What types of materials are being managed? (e.g., surplus recoverable foods, food scraps, wasted food. How are these materials managed? Who is responsible for managing them? (Organizations, agencies, businesses, or other entities) What products are generated, and how are they utilized or managed? (e.g., compost, animal feed, energy products) Who funds the management of these materials? (Funding sources, grants, partnerships) Who generates these materials? (Identify the origin: households, institutions, businesses, etc.)**

1. We manage food scraps.
2. Our company collects food scraps from households and commercial entities using 5-gallon buckets, 32-gallon toters, or 48-gallon toters that we provide to the customer. Our drop spots are set up and collected by us, but are managed by the city. They provide the 48 gallon toters used at the drop spot locations and maintain the area around where these bins are placed. All collected material is then transported up to the Hudson Valley in NY.
3. ^^
4. All food scraps are processed into compost on our site in Kerhonkson, NY. We create soil amendment products such as compost, worm castings (from vermicompost), Plant Jolt (mixture of compost and worm castings), and extracts/compost tea. We sell these products to local organic farmers and home gardeners.
5. We are a for-profit business, so we are paid for our services and products.
6. We receive the food scrap material from households, business and institutions.

- 5. Regulatory Impact: Describe how laws, policies, regulations, and/or code have affected your program or project. This may include positive, negative, or neutral**

impacts. Consider noting which regulations apply, how they influenced implementation or operations, any challenges or barriers encountered, and how compliance requirements shaped program decisions.

The state of New Jersey requires businesses that generate 52+ tons of food waste per year to find an arrangement to compost or recycle their waste. Additionally, Hoboken has set out a zero-waste initiative, in which they strongly advise residents to participate in the city's composting program or subscribe to a pickup service. This encouragement and requirement from the city has a positive impact on our program, as it encourages people to participate and brings awareness and the benefits of compost to the people of the city.

6. Measurable Increase in Supply: Include data or qualitative outcomes showing growth in collection, diversion, or reuse volumes if available.

Below is how much food scraps have been collected via drop-spots and door-to-door service over the course of 5 years.

Dropspot:

- (2020) - 23.06 tons
- (2021) - 73.05 tons
- (2022) - 98.67 tons
- (2023) - 99.59 tons
- (2024) - 85.16 tons
- (2025) - 94.77

Door-to-door:

- (2020) - 19.05 tons
- (2021) - 30.21 tons
- (2022) - 35.73 tons
- (2023) - 45.64 tons
- (2024) - 40.69 tons
- (2025) - 38.01 tons

7. Behavior Change: Describe whether the initiative resulted in measurable behavior change and explain how you determined this. If behavior change

occurred, outline the strategies that proved most effective. Please include any available data or evidence that supports your findings.

We do not have a way to measure behavior changes. However, there are many articles that describe how composting can change someone's lifestyle (i.e., increased mindfulness when buying food, more intentional purchasing of sustainable products and sometimes increases the purchasing of food).

Here are a couple articles:

- <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/composting-101#benefits>
- <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food/composting#:~:text=Composting%20is%20a%20form%20of,supports%20local%20jobs%20and%20economies>
- https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=5544898#:~:text=This%20study%20examines%20the%20impact,responses%20in%20environmental%20policy%20design

- 8. Benefits and Impacts (Economic, Environmental, and Social): Describe the economic, environmental, and social sustainability impacts of the program, policy, or initiative. This may include both positive and negative outcomes. You may address impacts such as costs or savings, job creation, waste reduction, emissions, resource conservation, community engagement, equity, or public health. Please include data or qualitative observations where available and note any trade-offs or challenges.**

Economic: our program offers job positions that are local, giving back to the community, and environmentally conscious. Challenges: this program requires materials such as sheds and totes, and trucks for hauling, and of course, the maintenance of these things is all additional expenses for ourselves and the city.

Environmental: we are diverting waste from landfills, which also reduces carbon emissions. Our compost products facilitate soil health and regeneration and could help reduce the use of chemical fertilizers. Challenges: the use of vehicles and the emissions they produce for collection and hauling

Social: engages people in climate action, increases awareness of sustainability, allows the opportunity for educating the public about compost and it's benefits. The program allows

easy access for a lot of people all over the city. Challenges: there are still participation barriers, as well as the increased possibility of contamination.

9. How Stakeholder Buy-In Was Achieved: Explain how the program gained support from key stakeholders (e.g., government agencies, businesses, residents, nonprofits).

We had municipal quizzes sent out, public meetings, tabled at farmers' markets, and local commercials/advertisements to gain interest.

10. Stakeholders' Perspectives and Dynamics at Play: Highlight collaboration dynamics, challenges, or differing stakeholder interests and how they were addressed.

Cost was our biggest challenge for most of our stakeholders. We addressed this issue by offering a spectrum of services from free to paid subscriptions.

Convenience was also important. We were able to trial locations around the city to see where the best place to put our drop spots would be. We now have 12 drop spot locations in Hoboken, which allows everyone to have AT MOST a 10 min walk to a drop location.

11. Lessons Learned: Share what worked well, what didn't, and recommendations for others seeking to replicate your approach.

- Get a buy-in for a program from elected officials. They should be in the discussions from the get-go. You have to sell them the importance of the program and get them to make funds available to invest in it. Suggest the municipality start with a pilot.
- Offer a sample program to gauge interest.
- Initiate community involvement early and often, and identify who will be your advocates. - Discuss a "scaling trajectory" and what steps are needed by both parties to scale a program, maintain it, etc.
- Encourage the municipality to allow or require that a certain percentage of the food scraps collected are composted within the city limits to demonstrate the value of compost and to create a "real-time," living circularity model.