

Diverting Food from Landfill

in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Region

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Unwanted food makes its way to our landfills 96% of the time: The most undesirable route. Across this Region, people, schools, communities, and municipal staff are working hard to implement better strategies for unwanted food to provide value rather than sunk costs.



Compost collection tote in Eastman.



Secured Collection Bin.

Eastman Composting Pilot, Positive Results!

Conversations with Town officials and Eastman community leadership determined that the best approach would be a pilot program with Eastman residents, who comprise approximately 85% of Grantham residents.

Beginning with a home composting workshop offered by Cat Buxton of Grow More, Waste Less in May 2024, the Sustainable Eastman Committee launched a two-month food scrap diversion pilot program in early June with 22 households from the Eastman community. Participating residents received an orientation to the program, a complimentary bucket with a cover, and a countertop food scrap collection bin if needed, as well as informational handouts. Feedback from residents was solicited via email with 100% positive responses to the program.

Community collection bins were constructed and installed at an overflow parking lot at Eastman using a secured box construction with 4, 60-gallon totes for depositing food scraps, and precautions taken to prevent rodent and bear concerns raised by residents. The pilot included several condominium residents as well as single family home residents. The Eastman community contracted with commercial food scrap company We Recycle Food, a division of Nordic Waste Services for weekly food scrap pick up.

Composting Training: Successful Municipal and Institutional Design

UVLSRPC coordinated a two-day training for municipalities and institutions to develop and maintain a food-scrap composting program. The training was held at the Sunrise Farm in White River Junction on Wednesday, August 28 and Thursday, August 29. Ten participants attended classroom training in the barn and did hands-on activities to learn about the different facets of composting. Participants came from North Country Growers in Berlin, NH (new business to grow lettuce); the City of Lebanon Landfill and waste management facility, NH; Upper Valley Super Compost Project, North Thetford, VT; Small Kindness, LLC, Waitsfield, VT; East of the Tracks, WRJ, VT; Solid Waste Committee, Charlestown, NH; Chittenden Solid Waste District, VT; and Greater Upper Valley SWMD, VT.



Maine Compost School Training.

A Snippet from our New Tip Sheet on Community Composting Systems

Why Community Composting?

- Less methane gas generated in landfills
- Reduction of organic material in the waste stream
- Cost savings on waste disposal fees
- Environmental education opportunities for school curriculums
- Improves soil health for community and school gardens

Is Your Organization Ready for Community Composting?

- Does the school or garden leadership support a composting project?
- Are there committed volunteers and staff ready to take the lead?
- Do food service staff and community garden participants have the capacity to implement the program?
- Is there space on site for collection and composting of food scraps?
- If not, is there potential funding for transportation of food scraps to a composting facility?
- Is your municipality actively diverting food scraps from the waste stream?

Program Resources

MUNICIPAL TIP SHEETS! Topics include: How to start a Municipal Program, Pilot Program Case Studies, Collection & On-Farm Collaboration, Permitting, Community Systems, Financial Considerations, and Commonly Asked Questions.

COMPOST COMICS! A series of five comics that tell the story of Corey who saves the world by decomposing in a compost pile.

A program of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission
Funded by the USDA Solid Waste Program. Visit us at
<https://uulsrpc.org/environment/solid-waste-management/>

