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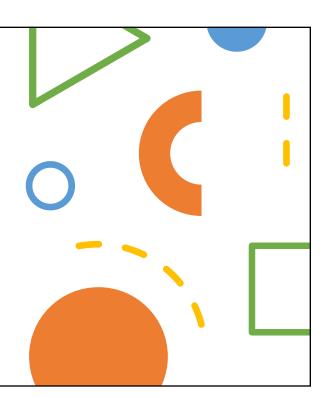
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Speakers

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Talking Points

- Introduction & Welcome
- Identify the food waste diversion possibilities
- Grants
- Considerations for Communities
- Support the need and structure
- Identifying and Sharing the Message
- Group Discussion & Activity
- Closing Remarks



Community Composting What's it All About?



Mark A. King

Organics Management Specialist

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

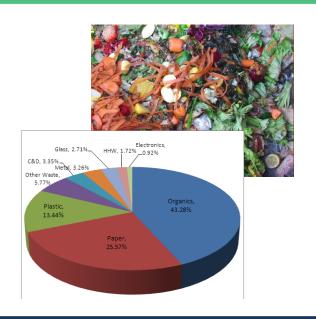
Protecting Maine's Air, Land and Water

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What's Out There?

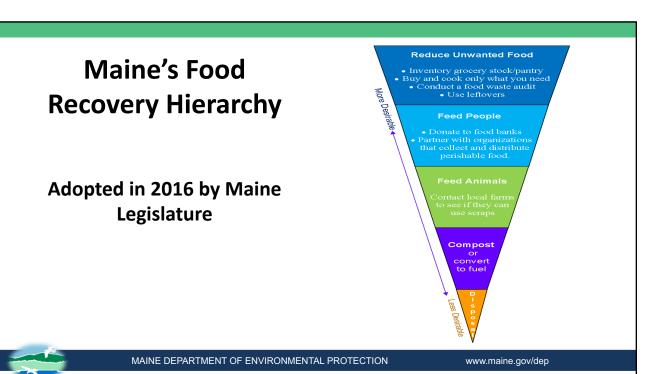
Nationwide

- the average resident produces approximately 150-200 lbs. of food scraps per year.
- 80% of Commercial food scraps (restaurant, cafeterias, supermarkets, etc.).



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Q



"Just because it is not perfect looking...Does not mean it isn't edible!"

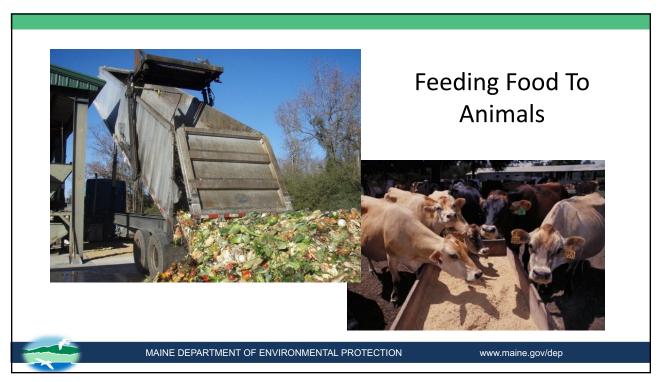
Aesthetics ≠ Nutrition

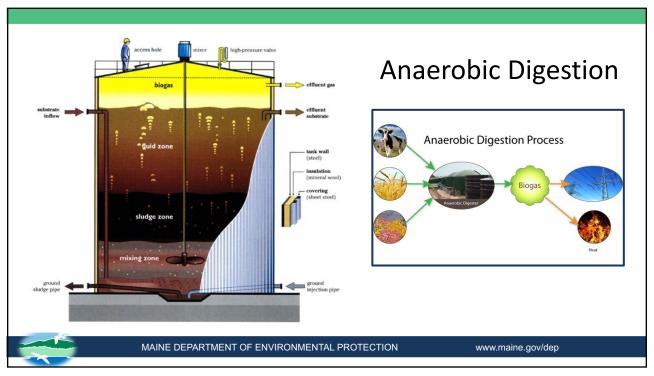
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Circling Back to Module 3...

May or may not need a permit to:

- Collect and Compost on-site
- Collect and Transfer off-site

Curbside pickup

Private hauler or municipally provided



Just to quickly circle back and recap from module 3.. There are a number of possibilities to divert food waste given the types of facility, community program or institution.

*MAY OR MAY NOT NEED A PERMIT (NEW OR MODIFIED EXISTING PERMIT) FOR: Collect and Compost off-site Permit: town transfer station, private composting facility

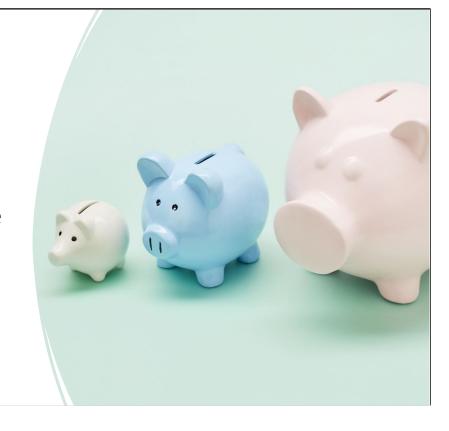
Collect and Transfer off-site – drop-off site at the transfer station

Permit-exempt composting at: community garden, school, camp, etc. Permit-exempt "satellite" drop off site at Food CoOp, church, town office, etc.

Curbside Pickup
Private hauler
Municipally provided

SHOW ME THE MONEY!

Grant Options for Starting a Food Waste Diversion Program Andrea Folsom, NRRA





Federal Grant Opportunities

www.nrrarecycles.org/grant-opportunities

- USDA Community Facility Loan and Grant Program
- USDA Solid Waste Management Grant
- EPA Healthy Communities Grant



USDA Community Facility Loan and Grant Program

This program provides affordable funding to develop essential community facilities in rural areas. Loan and grants can be used for a wide variety of essential community needs, including solid waste infrastructure. This could include recycling equipment such as balers, scales, storage containers and glass crushers. It could also include safety equipment, signage, and bathroom facilities at transfer stations. Other possible uses include the purchase of computers and cameras for transfer station use. The Community Facility Grant program provides matching grants up to \$50,000 to communities based on population and median household income. This grant is for communities of 20,000 residents or less, with priority given to small communities with a population of 5,500 or less and low-income communities having a median household income below 80% of the state nonmetropolitan median household income.

Applications accepted year-round!

USDA Solid Waste Management Grant

This program reduces or eliminates pollution of water resources by providing funding for organizations that provide technical assistance or training to improve the planning and management of solid waste sites. **What is an eligible area?**

- •Rural areas and towns with a population of 10,000 or less -- check eligible addresses
- •Special consideration may be given for projects serving:
 - An area with fewer than 5,500 or fewer than 2,500 people;
 - Regional, multi-state or national areas; or
 - Lower-income populations.

What may the funds be used for?

- •Evaluate current landfill conditions to identify threats to water resources.
- •Provide technical assistance or training to enhance the operation and maintenance of active landfills.
- •Provide technical assistance or training to help communities reduce the amount of solid waste coming into a landfill.
- •Provide technical assistance or training to prepare for closure and future use of a landfill site.

Application window is open from October 1 - December 31 each year.

EPA Region 1 Healthy Communities

The Healthy Communities Grant Program is EPA New England's main competitive grant program to work directly with communities to reduce environmental risks to protect and improve human health and the quality of life. The Healthy Communities Grant Program will achieve this through identifying and funding projects that:

- •Target resources to benefit communities at risk [areas needing to create community resilience, environmental justice areas of potential concern, sensitive populations (e.g., children, elderly, tribes, urban and rural residents, and others at increased risk)].
- •Assess, understand, and reduce environmental and human health risks.
- •Increase collaboration through partnerships and community-based projects.
- •Build institutional and community capacity to understand and solve environmental and human health problems.
- •Achieve measurable environmental and human health benefits.

Application window is usually open in the Spring of each year.

Local Grant Opportunities

- NEGEF Seed & Grow Grants
- NBRC Catalyst Program
- NHDES Solid Waste
 Management Fund is
 coming online (soon) and
 50% will be allocated to
 composting or food
 waste diversion projects!



Seed & Grow Grants

- The Seed grant program is geared towards groups launching new projects or starting to significantly change the direction of an existing project. Most often, groups have been working on the project less than a year and usually don't yet have much direct experience with implementing the idea.
- The Grow grant program is geared towards groups who have some experience implementing a project in their community. Grow grants support groups to deepen their work by further developing a community vision, lowering barriers to participation, identifying new stakeholders and working to bring in more voices and lived experiences.
- Both grant programs are available to municipalities and local groups (like recycling committees, non-profits, or other volunteer-based groups).

Catalyst Program

- In NH, the NBRC Service Area includes Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coos, Grafton, and Sullivan counties.
- Spring application deadline is May 3rd
- Basic public infrastructure shall mean those services that are generally necessary to conduct business and operate, and include waste, water, and energy - specifically, solid waste to include, recycling, composting, disposal, and waste-to-energy via incineration.

NHDES Grants - Upcoming

- NHDES solid waste management fund is coming online and 50% will be dogeared for composting/food waste diversion



Now that we've recapped the diversion options available, and Andrea presented the funding opportunities to support those efforts – let's dive more into things to consider when making program decisions.



CONSIDERATIONS

While you're determining the changes that will being made...

-@-

- WHO will be affected by the decision?
- WHAT is the message?
- HOW should I share my message?
- WHEN/WHERE should I communicate with my audience?
- WHY should residents participate/change their behaviors?



- *After you have looked at your options and picked the direction of your program, you have to ask yourself these questions:
- •WHO will be affected by this decision? The answer to this question will impact: WHAT your message will be, HOW you should share your message, WHEN and WHERE you should communicate with your audience.
- •Consider WHY residents should participate and change their behaviors? What are the benefits to being involved?

COLLECT DATA



Gather data specific to your community. Look at neighboring towns.

Support your changes and decisions about the program structure.

Gain town support.

Show there is an interest/need.



Alexandria Selectboard & Tamworth Recycling Project members had a joint site visit to the Gilford Transfer Station.

This slide is a repeat from Module 3 but the point is to stress that data collection is very important!!

Collect data to support your decisions!! Gather data from within your town and consider looking at neighboring towns.

Data supports the decision for "best fit" program.

Gain support from town committees like selectboard, planning board... but also support from residents and town staff like department of public works. Show decisionmakers there is an interest and a need from the community.

In the last module, we talked about the ways to collect data, SO... once you have it... present it!

PRESENT THE DATA

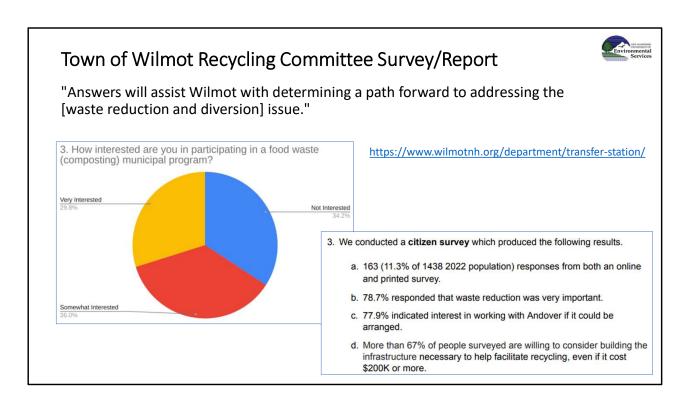
- What is the data your community needs to see?
 - Define "community"
- What are the values in your community?
 - Economics
 - · Environmental benefits
 - Social dynamics
- How should it be organized?
 - Reflect community values.
 - Flyer vs. Selectboard meeting
- Active and/or passive engagement?



Based on all the data you collected, what does your community need to see? All of it? Part of it? That answer might be based on the values in your community. It might make more sense just to present the economic benefits and in some communities, it might be more persuasive to also communicate the environmental and social benefits.

What are the values in your community? Economic, Environment, Social

How should it be organized? Present the data to reflect community values. Should it best be presented as a report (short/sweet or length/detailed)? As a campaign? On sandwich boards in the community? Through town meetings?



EXAMPLE – Survey/Report

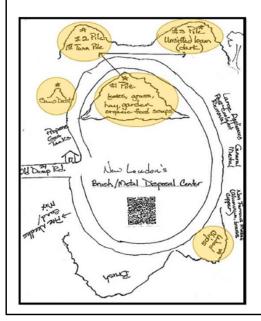
Wilmot Recycling Committee gathered online and hardcopy surveys from residents to better understand community interests in recycling, composting as well as their views on PAYT, regionalization, and facility investments.

168 residents responded to either an online or paper survey during November about the issues of waste reduction and recycling in the town.

- Clear purpose statement.
- Clearly states how the survey data will be used.
- Survey report mostly consists of pie charts short, 4 pages.
- Recycling committee report short, 3 pages summarizes the survey results and work they've conducted over the year.

Example – Town of New London





- Help residents understand the program parameters
- Town website, posted flyers, news articles, Earth Day demonstration with guest speakers



The Town of New London also gathered data through a resident survey focused on food waste composting. They then decided to start a pilot program and focused their outreach and education on helping residents understand the program parameters and where they can get access to resources that will help them be successful.

Sketched out facility map to show the town's brush and metal disposal center – depicts feedstock piles available to residents and where to drop off their food scraps. Conducted outreach:

Town website

Posted flyers

News articles

Earth Day compost demonstration with guest speakers (NRRA, UVLSRPC, Town of Hopkinton committee)



EXAMPLES – Active engagement

City of Durham Integrated Waste Management Advisory Committee (IWMAC) – hosted a workshop for households about backyard composting. To get people engaged and to provide an incentive, the committee raffled off an Earth Machine compost bin, a few boxes of BioBags and kitchen totes to collect food scraps in, and a bag of finished compost from Mr. Fox Composting.

Tamworth Recycling Project is a citizen group that is actively involved in their community. They encourage food waste reduction and diversion by creating signs to post around town, hosting workshops, and working with their elementary school to teach them about sustainable waste management AND create a mural at the transfer station.



EXAMPLE - Passive education

This composting demonstration area is set up year-round. Staff are NOT standing by all day to show residents the different options BUT residents can see different examples/options about what they can set up at their home. They can ask staff questions as needed.



LET'S TALK BEHAVIOR CHANGE!

When we start a new program, we are asking people to change their behavior. **This can be hard!**

Three Keys to Success:

- Access
- Knowledge
- Engagement





Access

We've talked a lot about this already. These are the conditions that shape people's opportunity and ability to compost. Do people have easy access to the service and the food waste diversion containers they need to be successful?

Knowledge

This is the specific information people need to decide what, when, and how to compost or divert their food waste. Is there guidance on what should and should not go in the bin, such as on-container signage, a mailed guide, or an online resource? How often are they receiving the information and the reminders?

Engagement

This stage is more complex and abstract. It encompasses an individual's values, beliefs, attitudes, and identity and the social dynamics and social norms at play within their household and community. At its most basic, it answers the question: once a person can compost or divert food waste through access and information – will they and will they do it properly?

Getting the Word Out

Ongoing, consistent messaging through signage, videos, social media, presentations, or mailings - **and often a mix of all** - is the best way to increase knowledge, engagement, and behavior change to support a successful food waste diversion program.







Help people overcome barriers by providing support and delivering feedback on how they are doing individually and collectively.

Increase the ease and convenience of composting and food waste diversion by ensuring people have adequate containers both inside and outside of the home, providing frequent collection service, delivering instructional materials, and sharing regular, ongoing information about what can and cannot be recycled. Consider developing recognition or incentive programs or conducting cart tagging initiatives to highlight regular errors or reassure people they are doing things right.

What to Say?

- Empathetic messaging "Confused about composting?"
- Logical messaging –
 "Food waste makes up 24% of
 MSW going into the landfill.
 Diversion reduces this
 percentage and turns food
 waste into compost or energy."
- Emotional messaging "Have you ever wondered what tomorrow may bring?





Empathetic - Showing empathy for composting confusion **Logical -** Showing food waste turning into compost **Emotional -** Reminding people to think about the future of their waste.

Studies have shown that empathetic messaging is more effective than logical or emotional messaging.



Address confusion and frustration head on with an empathetic tone.



Different Goals for Messaging

Provide frequent visuals of what can and cannot be composted or diverted.

Give different levels of information for different types of composters.

Activate positive feelings to increase enthusiasm for food waste diversion or composting!

Provide frequent visuals of what can and cannot be composted or diverted. Ideally this would be in the form of a physical mailer or on signage and focus on commonly known trouble spots like plastic stickers and pet waste.

Give different levels of information for different types of composters. Those just getting started need to focus on the basics first, while more proficient, committed composters and diverters may want more specifics on non-foodwaste that could be composted or diverted.

Activate positive feelings to increase enthusiasm for recycling. Incentives and recognition all help reinforce good food waste diversion behavior as a positive social norm and make learning rewarding. Composting success stories that show how and why the system works builds trust that doing it right is worthwhile. Even something as simple as a bin decal reading "Headed off to a new life, not the landfill" provides encouragement and reassurance.

- Proactively share composting success stories with the public to counteract the flow of composting myths and misinformation and show how and why the program works.

Behavior change has two broad stages



Funnel

Raising awareness and curiosity to **spark** motivation to start (or restart)



Loop

Sustaining motivation to continue, through reward, felt impact, and meaning.





Keep it clear: Write with middle-schoolers in mind at a 5th or 6th grade level.

Make it accessible: Translate materials into additional languages commonly spoken in your community.

Picture it: When possible, use images over words.



WHAT are the most important points?

WHAT the program is
WHO can participate
WHERE it is being held
WHEN it is happening
COST (if any)
ASK - phone or email
for questions



This is the party invite! People Have Questions. We Must Provide Clear and Effective Answers.

What are the most important pieces people need to know?

WHO can participate
WHAT the program is
WHERE it is being held
WHEN is it happening/starting
COST if any
ASK – phone or email for resident questions

Have multiple options available – in person questions, email, phone

Defining Your Message

WHO will be participating?

Residents

Pilot Program participants

Transfer Station customers

Others?



HOW is Information Shared?

Town website

Newsletters

Social media

Religious Institutions

Flyers and Signs

Local Businesses

Public Meetings (e.g. Select Board meetings)

Town Events (e.g. Farmer's Market)

Newspaper (local or regional)



This will be COMMUNITY SPECIFIC.

Think about the ways in which your community gets information. Do you have a local newspaper or a newsletter put out by a townsperson?

Can you put up a-frame signs or host presentations at public meetings such as presenting to the select board?

Are there local businesses that may be interested in helping to spread the word? Town committees that could help?

Information Dissemination can center the change around a town event to get the word out to more people

- · Town-wide celebration or gathering
- During a summer concert series
- Farmer's market
- Town meeting, deliberative session, and on voting day

Research from The Recycling Partnership has shown that mailers – including letters from the town – are particularly effective in both jumpstarting a program and increasing engagement (and decreasing contamination).



(yes, this is in CA and not NH, but give it a chance!)

The Salinas Valley SWD in California has a robust website with loads of information for residents, including printables. They have also worked with municipalities within their SWD to send mailers and letters to residents to increase knowledge and engagement with their food waste diversion program. They have an active social media presence and host in-person events as well.

ASK THE AUDIENCE - WHAT DO YOU NOTICE?

A mix of Empathetic and Emotional messaging

Images of examples that can be diverted or composted

Clear, straightforward writing, this handout is also available in Spanish. It also has a catchy motto, "If it grows, it goes" – simple messaging is key!

Empathetic – "need more space in your trash cart?" Emotional – "give food scraps new life"

This is a double-sided mailer that can be printed as a handout or mailed to residents.



More often than we would like, our behaviors are influenced by what we think other people are doing (or thinking). By highlighting the fact that 79% of residents think it's important to reduce waste by composting, less-engaged residents may be more likely to change their mind – and their behaviors.



Anticipating questions – they are explicit as to what can and cannot go into their diversion program. They also answer questions that may come from their tagline of "if it grows, it goes." Don't assume anything – especially not when it comes to diversion – you will need to point out the little things.





FOOD SCRAPS KITCHEN CONTAINERS OPTIONS







Tips for Kitchen Storage and Keeping Your Cart Clean

Here are some easy tips on how to prevent fruit flies and odors in both your kitchen as well as green cart:

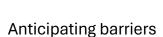
KEEP A ROUTINE

Take your scraps to your cart every few days, even if not full. Remember that plastic should never be placed in the cart as it will ruin the compost!

SMART KITCHEN STORAGE

- · Use a kitchen container that works for you, such as a kitchen pail. Or you can just repurpose an old container: large yogurt or ice cream tubs are great no-cost options!
- Freeze it Scraps can be stored in the freezer to avoid odors
- Use a lid A tight fitting lid on your container will help keep flies away. A vented lid will prevent flies and also prevent anaerobic (rotting) stinky!
- Wash your kitchen container thoroughly with detergent as needed. Most containers are dishwasher safe as well!
- Put melon scraps immediately into your food and yard waste cart and cover.





- They offer concrete examples of other containers that can be used for food
- The website include an accessibility menu
- They offer real-life suggestions for keeping the kitchen container and cart clean