

Food Scrap Diversion and Management - Tip Sheet #1

How to Start a Municipal Food Scrap Diversion Program

Step 1. - CONTACT NH DES

Before getting started, any town seeking to start a food scrap diversion or composting program should review Tip Sheet #4 on Permitting and contact NHDES' Solid Waste Engineering and Permitting Section. Staff will provide tailored guidance based on the type of program you envision. The best way to contact the Solid Waste Engineering and Permitting Section is to email the office at swmbpermitting@des.nh.gov or call (603) 271-2925.

Step 2. TOUR A FACILITY

Arrange a tour of a nearby facility to observe operations similar to the program your municipality will pursue. The following communities in the Upper Valley have food scrap diversion programs:

[City of Lebanon Solid Waste and Recycling Facility](#) (on site collection & composting)

Solid Waste Manager: Erica Douglas Email: erica.douglas@lebanonnh.gov Phone: (603) 298-6486

[New London Transfer Station](#) (on site collection & off-site processing)

Administrative Assistant: Nancy Barthol Email: N.Barthol@newlondon.nh.gov Phone: (603) 526-6337

Step 3. HAVE AN END GOAL IN MIND

Does the program need to show proven financial savings? Does it need to save landfill space or reduce hauling fees? Does it need to provide a useful compost product for municipal use or sale? Is it connected to food access initiatives? Does the program support the work of a new or existing Waste Reduction Committee? Contact info@uvlsrpc.org for resources on program visioning and assessment.

Step 4. DESIGN A PILOT PROGRAM

- Decide whether your facility will collect and compost on site, collect and transport to Lebanon, collect and contract with a third party collection service, offer curbside pick up, or incentivize community composting efforts within neighborhoods and organizations.
- Identify partner organizations and residents to champion and provide input. This may include organizations willing to give inputs to a pilot program.
- Identify logistical needs (e.g., collection space, hauling, public education, sorting containers, staff) for the desired pilot program. Adjust pilot program as needed to fit available resources.
- Decide the length of the pilot. Generally 8-10 weeks is enough time to collect the necessary data to determine whether to go forward with an ongoing program. Pilots for on site composting pilots run longer.

Step 5. UNDERSTAND THE BUDGET IMPLICATIONS (see next page for equipment considerations and Tip Sheet #5 for full financial discussion)

Step 6. ATTEND A TRAINING PROGRAM (see options and links below)

Step 7. DEVELOP & DISTRIBUTE PUBLIC EDUCATION MATERIALS

Launch the pilot program with a public awareness and education campaign (flyers, social media, emails). For resident education on waste reduction, see our public resources at www.uvlsrpc.org/food-scrap or contact us for additional more tailored recommendations on content.

Step 8. BE CREATIVE! There are a number of ways to achieve food scrap diversion for your community. Think farms, community gardens, local food forests. Contact info@uvlsrpc.org for more information.



EQUIPMENT CONSIDERATIONS & TRAINING RESOURCES

ON SITE COMPOSTING

For onsite composting, equipment needs include:

- Hire a consultant to advise on the system design, cost, and site considerations
- Equipment to track temperature and turn the piles or windrows of organic material
- Aeration system or concrete platform/structure, dependent on volume and system design
- Staff time to manage the program
- Access to a supply of carbon amendments such as leaves, ash, wood chips to maintain a ratio of 3:1, the typical ratio of carbon to food scraps

ON SITE COLLECTION & TRANSPORT

For food scrap drop off, equipment needs include:

- Five gallon pail for residents
- Fifty-five gallon collection totes
- Compostable bags for public distribution (optional)
- Information sheet for participant distribution
- Signs for drop off area



*New London Transfer Station Staff
L to R: David Briggs, Jeffrey Currier and
Kenny Waldo (Supervisor).*

CURBSIDE COLLECTION

[Litterless.com](https://www.litterless.com) maintains a list of New Hampshire communities who offer curbside pick up of food scraps including the vendors for each community.

SOURCE FOR RESIDENTIAL FOOD SCRAP BINS & BUCKETS

The Northeast Resource Recovery Association holds an annual sale each spring for bulk purchase of residential composting bins and buckets. These can then be provided to residents at a low price. Contact NRRRA at 603-736-4401 or info@nrrarecycles.org. Some municipalities may also provide a 5 gallon pail with a cover to residents.

TRAINING PROGRAMS

Attend a course for municipal/commercial composting that meets [Env-Sw 607.02\(a\)](#) requirements:

- Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) [Managing Composting Programs](#) covers best practices, emerging technologies, and management issues characteristic of municipal composting.
- [Maine Compost School](#) offers a certificate program and trains personnel to be qualified compost site operators. Participants receive classroom instruction, laboratory experience and hands-on project exercises. UVLSRPC is organizing an in-person training event for the Summer of 2024.
- [131 School of Composting](#) is a two-month online program focused on best practices for food scrap composting. The course is designed for any-size operation above the home-scale.
- [USCC Compost Research & Education Foundation](#) is a 5-day course that offers in-depth lectures by nationally-recognized instructors with hands-on activities, including a team pile build and monitoring, as well as tours to local facilities.
- [Understanding NH & VT Solid Waste Regulations](#) is a one hour webinar outlining how Solid Waste Rules apply to on-farm food scrap composting in Vermont and New Hampshire.

