

# WASTE MANAGEMENT

Enhancing and Expanding  
Existing Organic Waste  
Diversion Efforts

## Facilitators:

Michelle Kokolis, Environmental Finance Center  
Carole Barth, Prince George's County



# Benefits of Increasing Organic Waste Composting

- Reduces the cost of waste disposal in government tipping fees as waste tonnage is reduced.
- Can result in a profitable byproduct that can be resold for gardening

## Economic Benefit

- Positive impact on air quality near landfill
- Reduces rates of respiratory incidents (asthma).

## Human Health Benefit

- Reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- Reduces smog and particulate air pollution.
- Compost amended soil increases water retention reducing runoff
- Sequesters carbon in the soil as compost is used to amend gardens and soil

## Environmental Benefit

# Snapshot of Efforts in the County

- Piloted a curbside food scraps collection program from December 2017 to January 2019. Approximately 200 households from four diverse communities diverted an estimated total of 112,000 pounds of food scraps from the landfill. The program is now expanding to 3,000 households and plans county-wide deployment in the next two to three years.
- The County contracts with Maryland Environmental Services to operate the Organics Composting Facility in Upper Marlboro, MD. Yard trim (including grass clippings, leaves, brush, small branches, and Christmas trees), is collected from approximately 172,000 households in the County and turned into Leafgro®.
- Half a dozen Prince George's County municipalities are leading organic waste composting programs including backyard composting, curbside pickup, and education and outreach efforts.



We're turning  
**FOOD SCRAPS**  
into **COMPOST**



**CLAIM YOUR ORGANICS CART**  
response required

Prince George's County is offering a Curbside Organics Composting Program that includes food scraps collected along with your regular yard trim. Opt-In now to participate in food scrap collection.

in...

Eligible households that received a **Food Scraps Compost** letter, will receive a postcard with instructions on how to participate soon.



# Preliminary Organic Waste Action Recommendations

- Enhance County Waste reduction and diversion efforts. Prioritize the strategic expansion of the food scraps curbside collection program so more households and high use/waste generating businesses have access to composting. Support plastic bag ban and bottle deposit efforts



20<sup>th</sup> annual mulch madness

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

SATURDAY **APRIL 27**

8 am to 1 pm

Prince George's County Q Composting Facility  
6550 S.E. Crain Highway  
Upper Marlboro, MD  
(From Crain Highway, proceed to the Main Road to Facility)

Learn to reduce water usage, or prevent soil erosion the use of herbicides in your home gardens by...

**RESTRICTIONS:**

- Prince George's County residents only
- Only non-commercial vehicles, 3/4 ton maximum weight
- No business vehicle signage will be permitted, all com signs should be covered or removed prior to entering the


**SOURCE REDUCTION TIPS**

- Use mulch to suppress weed growth and provide nutrients
- Grass cycle: Use a mulching mower to finely shred your grass and leave it on the lawn.
- Start a backyard compost pile.

Reduce  
Recover  
Recycle

**FOOD WASTE**  
in Prince George's County, MD  
April 2019

DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
**PGC COMPOSTS**



What does a successful expansion of Prince George's County organic waste diversion program look like?

---

- WHO?
- WHAT?
- WHEN?
- WHERE?
- HOW?



# What could an expanded organic waste diversion program in Prince George's County look like?

- Include apartments; place for them to deposit waste food daily
- Composting food waste from Riderwood eateries (note straddles MOCO PGC line)
- Incorporate composting in science curriculum at all levels; currently it is not stressed like recycling
- Composting at schools—not just in schoolyard but curbside pickup
- Regional composting demonstration sites
- Reducing waste first, e.g. food sharing to reduce hunger, then compost / recycling
- Meeting people where they are; curbside versus on site.
- Like to see timetable – how long before curbside for all who are getting county services; smaller drop off sites for those who don't get waste pickup, and plan for multifamily residences
- Ban organics in landfill by 2030
- Can food scraps be mixed with yard waste to make it easy for participants?

## Challenges

- Motivating people to participate and participate correctly (e.g., separate organics from recyclables)
- Making sure we get message to everyone.
- Including far-flung communities
- Educate in food purchasing; to not over purchase; how to use very ripe food
- County needs to work with municipalities to help get programs
- Challenge is funding waste program; fee has not gone up in years, also need to fund education.

## Opportunities

- *E.g., new workforce development*
- Educational opportunity; service-learning hours, internships science fair projects.
- Reduce chemical fertilizers
- Composting facility already wo

## Who benefits?

- Ideally, everyone!

## Who is burdened or left out?

- Multifamily residences might be left out
- Those not getting County waste management
- More rural areas

## How do we ensure equitable outcomes?

- Survey residents about their needs
- Be sure finished compost is available to everyone and affordable
- Apartments need smaller individual collection containers



# What does success in the County look like in the next 3-5 years?

- Research and Data Needs
- Policy/Ordinance Changes
- Residential Outreach Efforts
- Monitoring and Evaluation

- Are there any case studies from other areas that we can learn from and emulate?
- Dramatic reduction of the percentage of food waste going to the landfill (now 23%)
- Bottle ban and bag ban have been enacted

Apply to be a County Climate Action Resident Expert

- <https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17>

Visit the DMV Climate Partners Website

- <https://climatepartners.org>

Learn More About Upcoming Meetings

- [mypgc.us/climateactionplan](http://mypgc.us/climateactionplan)

Explore the County CAP Virtual House

- <https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ>

Provide Comments and Feedback

- <https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ>

# Stay Engaged

#### 4. REDUCING COUNTY WASTE CHAT TEXT

19:09:56	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Apply to be a County Climate Action Resident Expert: <a href="https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17">https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17</a>
19:11:44	From Martha Ainsworth : FOr those of us who just arrived in the room, how many slides have we missed so fara?
19:11:54	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Visit the DMV Climate Partners Website: <a href="https://climatepartners.org">https://climatepartners.org</a>
19:12:34	From 🗑️ Andrea Crooms (DoE) : Martha- only one, we started out talking about the benefits of waste diversion generally.
19:12:47	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : 2 slides
19:13:20	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Martha, you could teach us
19:14:22	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Learn More About Upcoming Meetings: <a href="http://mypgc.us/climateactionplan">mypgc.us/climateactionplan</a>
19:14:36	From Martha Ainsworth : MDE has revised its estimates of methane emissions from landfills -- they are 3-4 times higher. MD's landfills now account for 44% of all methane emissions in MD, and the largest emitter is the Brown Station Road Landfill.
19:15:20	From Martha Ainsworth : That's why diverting organic waste from the landfill is so important - it will reduce future methane emissions.
19:15:20	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Solution?
19:15:32	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : 👍
19:16:25	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Explore the County CAP Virtual House: <a href="https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ">https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ</a>
19:16:27	From Waste : Don't think waste should solely focus on composting. Redirecting items with remaining useful like collected from Bulk Trash pickups and landfill drop off should not be overlooked.
19:16:56	From Amanda Dewey : I would love to see organic waste/composting be as accessible to residents, schools, and businesses as “traditional” waste disposal is. To make composting second nature and equally convenient, but also avoid some of the pitfalls that we have hit with recycling where convenience has led to poorer quality programs (i.e. unrecyclable items being put in recycling bins, etc). This is just on the organics front - lots of thoughts on other types of waste as well
19:17:54	From Maya Miller : In addition to trash bins in schools, possibly composting bins too. The compost could then be transported to composting facilities. Also at lunch, instead of plastic milk bottles, cardboard milk containers could be used since they are biodegradable.
19:18:31	From Chloe Waterman : @Maya, implementing milk dispensers is even better!
19:18:42	From Chloe Waterman : Less packaging waste but also less milk waste
19:18:46	From Maya Miller : Good idea!
19:18:58	From Luis Carrasco : I would support a project to discourage consumption of water in plastic bottles. It's mostly not necessary and produces a lot of plastic waste.
19:19:13	From Yesysrael Cook : If so, please add International High School at Largo
19:19:24	From 🗑️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Great point Luis
19:19:54	From Luis Carrasco : Thanks, Commissioner.
19:20:10	From Chloe Waterman : <a href="http://pgcfec.org/2-uncategorised/30-prince-george-s-county-food-rescue.html">http://pgcfec.org/2-uncategorised/30-prince-george-s-county-food-rescue.html</a>
19:20:22	From Reducing Waste: James Roberson : A supported composting program for Prince George's County Public Schools is needed.



19:20:24	From Amanda Dewey : In Berwyn Heights we've started a composting program with a central collection point, but I'm hoping for something that meets people where they are, whether it's curbside pickup or just more drop off locations
19:20:40	From Amanda Dewey : And alternative fuel vehicles used for compost pickup and transport
19:20:58	From Amanda Dewey : Such great points Chloe!
19:22:39	From Yesysrael Cook : Thanks Jhanna
19:22:40	From Martha Ainsworth : I'm trying to raise my hand, but not getting a hand raising icon. only a wave
19:23:08	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : At the bottom
19:23:19	From Chloe Waterman : Share tables in schools is a great idea!
19:23:44	From Chloe Waterman : See this guidance from DCPS: <a href="https://dgs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dgs/publication/attachments/Share%20Table%20Guide%20for%20DC%20Schools.pdf">https://dgs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dgs/publication/attachments/Share%20Table%20Guide%20for%20DC%20Schools.pdf</a>
19:26:10	From Yesysrael Cook : A TV and radio campaign to inform people. I have a green compost bin but I am not sure which day it will be picked up as of yet.
19:26:16	From Maya Miller : I'm not sure if any schools in Prince George's county are using styrofoam lunch trays, but if so I think they should be replaced with compostable trays.
19:27:42	From Chloe Waterman : Appreciate that suggestion of establishing long-term targets
19:27:44	From Amanda Dewey : Lots of places (including Berwyn Heights for full transparency) do twice weekly trash pick up, which has a significant carbon footprint. Our residents are really attached to it. It would be great for places with two trash pick up days to replace one with organic pick up. That would be a climate win but would also show people how much your waste can be reduced and be less gross if you don't have the organics in it
19:27:55	From Yesysrael Cook : Have restaurants been asked to participate?
19:28:51	From Chloe Waterman : @Yesysrael, the FEC's new program I linked to earlier is trying to engage restaurants!
19:29:02	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Many county residents and officials want to return to twice week pick up. Thoughts???
19:29:13	From Yesysrael Cook : Yes, we have the most green schools in the state
19:29:28	From Barbara Sollner-Webb (go to "waste" please) : my mic seems to not work; sorry. we were in the demo composting program and because are in West Laurel, so far from Upper Marlboro, they just mixed the food scraps with the yard waste; why can't the whole county do this?
19:30:16	From waste Benjamin Fischler : Barbara I think this is the plan.
19:30:22	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! 🔊 Provide Comments and Feedback: <a href="https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ">https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ</a>
19:30:31	From Beth Gingold- Waste : DCPS Waste Management procedures <a href="https://dgs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dgs/publication/attachments/Waste%20Management%20Procedures%20V1.pdf">https://dgs.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dgs/publication/attachments/Waste%20Management%20Procedures%20V1.pdf</a>
19:31:35	From Amanda Dewey : Challenges: Siting, education, cost, convenience Opportunities: collaboration with local farmers, school partnerships
19:32:27	From Cheryl Fagbemi To 🧑 Facilitator: Michelle R Kokolis, EFC(Privately) : Opportunity- Reduce uses for chemical fertilize
19:32:33	From Martha Ainsworth : My suggestion is to commit to a timetable for: (a) access to curbside food scrap collection by all households served by the County; (b) Access of rural households to food scrap drop-off sites; (c) access of multifamily food waste composting; (d) more geographically distributed smaller composting sites in the county; (e) food waste composting at all public and private schools; (f) banning food waste from the landfill by 2030.
19:32:59	From Maya Miller : For the schools would the compost material be from student leftovers or food that hasn't been served yet that was leftover from that day? or both?
19:33:13	From Bill Walmsley : People need to be educated in their food purchasing so that they do not buy more than they can possibly eat creating needless waste.

19:33:23	From Pat Jackman : Need education and encouragement from County Council so municipalities realize they must take action. I see reticence and lack of action. Set up a target date and have municipalities report their compliance.
19:33:35	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Apply to be a County Climate Action Resident Expert: <a href="https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17">https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17</a> ✔️ Visit the DMV Climate Partners Website: <a href="https://climatepartners.org">https://climatepartners.org</a> ✔️ Learn More About Upcoming Meetings: <a href="http://mypgc.us/climateactionplan">mypgc.us/climateactionplan</a> ✔️ Explore the County CAP Virtual House: <a href="https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ">https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ</a> 🗣️ Provide Comments and Feedback: <a href="https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ">https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ</a>
19:34:01	From Commissioner: Donald Belle, PGCPs : Hauling fees
19:34:35	From Breanna Malcolm : There's a lack of awareness of the problem. Only recently has food waste become an important topic.
19:34:41	From Amanda Dewey : I would also identify the municipal/county relationships as a challenge. Some municipalities take responsibility for waste collection with others are served by county DPW, so collaborating so all have access is important
19:35:06	From Barbara Sollner-Webb (go to "waste" please) : I agree with Martha. But when Angela Alsobrooks was elected, the plan was within two years to have the curbside food wastes pick-up for the whole county (or that they can mix with yard wastes) -- why can't this schedule be done now??
19:35:35	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Correct
19:36:56	From Bill Walmsley : Challenge how to get businesses not served by county trash collection to include composting participation in the contracts they have with their haulers.
19:37:17	From Martha Ainsworth : An opportunity is the fact that the County has the largest food waste composting facility on the East Coast. Also, it costs no more for the haulers already under contract by the county. It can be collected at the same time as yard waste.
19:38:36	From Amanda Dewey : I've often wondered if a system that required folks to pay for waste disposal by weight, rather than a flat fee, would encourage them to reduce their waste in general. Rates for organic waste properly disposed for composting could be priced to incentivize compost over landfill
19:38:46	From Martha Ainsworth : The composting facility's sales of Leafgro Gold completely compensates for the operating costs of the facility.
19:39:21	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Amanda, the department concern has always been people resort to dumping or putting waste on their neighbors property
19:39:50	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Great point Martha
19:40:11	From Amanda Dewey : Interesting. Thanks, Tom
19:40:45	From Martha Ainsworth : Most likely to be left out are people in multifamily units and people in unincorporated areas not served by county services
19:40:55	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : I do not agree but that is the position
19:41:24	From Bill Walmsley : I believe our composting operation at Western Branch does not have bagging capabilities the compost they produce is only available in bulk not useful to many residents.
19:42:20	From Pat Jackman : Some municipalities are mix of apartments and single family homes. Need a huge education effort and making the process as easy as possible with public relations/marketing effort to keep it focused.
19:44:25	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : Expanding food waste pick up?
19:44:34	From 🗳️ Commissioner: Thomas Dernoga, Council Member : •STAY ENGAGED! ✔️ Apply to be a County Climate Action Resident Expert: <a href="https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17">https://forms.gle/z92cx7LLrYTmNLN17</a> ✔️ Visit the DMV Climate Partners Website: <a href="https://climatepartners.org">https://climatepartners.org</a> ✔️ Learn More About Upcoming Meetings: <a href="http://mypgc.us/climateactionplan">mypgc.us/climateactionplan</a> ✔️ Explore the County CAP Virtual House: <a href="https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ">https://bit.ly/2S7PgEQ</a> 🗣️ Provide Comments and Feedback: <a href="https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ">https://bit.ly/3vBKqNJ</a>
19:44:58	From Martha Ainsworth : Are we going to discuss reducing single-use plastic, which generates huge greenhouse gas emissions and environmental injustice? Or only composting?
19:45:37	From Martha Ainsworth : About 31% of municipal solid waste by weight in the landfill is compostable.