Building Collection Infrastructure for Composting: CET’s Role

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The Center for EcoTechnology helps people carry out their daily life with less environmental impact. We serve residents, businesses and communities across three areas:

- Waste reduction, recycling and composting
- Energy Efficiency
- Reuse and Repurposing though EcoBuilding Bargains, the CET retail store
• Partnership since 1990’s
• Recycling programs implemented in all locations, composting across Massachusetts and now in Connecticut
• Composting results in ~$200,000 in savings
• Recycling & composting resulted in $2.9M boost to the bottom line in 2012!
• Federal and state grant funds
• Mid 90’s – 7 stores in Pioneer Valley
• Similar project for CET, but no infrastructure
  – Recruited farmers, haulers and generators
• Big Y has expanded implementation over the course of 2 decades
• MassDEP Supermarket Certification
  – Started film plastics mid 2000’s
• No established organics collection route in Central MA for composting
• Big Y had stores ready to go and the desire to establish diversion programs
• Compost sites in the region were available for processing
• MassDEP grants funded CET to help start a compost collection route in the greater Worcester area
  – Recruit haulers
  – Connect haulers with permitted compost sites
  – Recruit generators (in addition to Big Y stores)
• Underserved area
  – “Dead Zone” of commercial food waste collection
• Food Waste Ban not yet a regulation
• Early adopters
  – Clark University, Big Y, Wooberry
• Motivators
  – Cost
  – Regulation
  – Environmental
Implementation

- 4 Worcester area Big Y Supermarkets acting as backbone of the route
- Densification ongoing
- Separate MassDEP grant for Devens area organics infrastructure
  - expanded collection area
• Contamination
• Secure outside containers
• Staff re-training
• Right size collection equipment
• Pick up frequency
• Odor/pest issues
• Generators & haulers must be driven to succeed
Moving Forward

- Routes are growing
- Food waste bans are sparking more interest (MA, CT & VT)
- More interest from haulers
- Demand for food waste
  - Renewable energy
  - Anaerobic Digesters
RecyclingWorks in Massachusetts is helping generators to implement more food waste diversion programs

- Recycling assistance program helping businesses and institutions to maximize recycling, reuse, and composting opportunities
- MassDEP funded
- www.recyclingworksma.com
Organics Diversion in CT

- EPA funded organics collection and diversion infrastructure work
  - Recruit haulers & generators
  - Assist in implementation
    - Logistics
    - Training
    - Follow up
- Big Y diversion programs
Contact Information

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