

# Successfully Engaging Businesses to Divert Food Scraps

July 24, 2014



*Cupertino, California*



# City of Cupertino

## *In the Heart of Silicon Valley*

**Population: ~ 60,000**

**Total waste collected:  
~ 50,000 tons annually**



## Program Characteristics

- Franchise agreement w/ a single hauler
- Free single-stream recycling for businesses
- Hauler collects & sells recyclables
- Voluntary organics collection
- Cupertino residents provided free certified organic compost
- Hauler collects & composts organic materials
- Businesses cannot be charged more to separate food waste than they had already paid for garbage

It began with a diversion goal and  
was implemented by franchise  
agreement with the City's hauler



**CUPERTINO GREEN**



# Consistency in outreach to residents and businesses strengthened the message across the community



# Kickoff: Green Leaders Workshop for Local Grocers & Markets



# Take the Food Recovery Challenge: What we can do for you...

## City of Cupertino

- Assistance with using EPA's tools
- Training by City staff (now bilingual)
- 3 FREE in-store bins for customer use
- GreenBiz perks
- *Cupertino Scene* article/local recognition

## U.S. EPA

- Free tools
- Assistance with measurement
- Regional & national awards
- Coordination with headquarters counterparts (if interested)

## City's Franchise Hauler

- Waste audits
- Outdoor commercial bins
- Signage for bins
- Multilingual training for business employees

## West Valley Community Services

- Regular pickup of donatable food
- Tax receipts

# Approaching grocery stores about food recovery



# Outcomes



## City of Cupertino Free Bulk Compost Program

2012 Schedule: Opens March 23, Closes October 20

Hours of Operation: 8:30 am to 11:00 a.m. Friday and Saturday

Closed: During rainy weather or if the site remains muddy and for Federal holiday weekends.

(Open: Memorial Day/Labor Day Closed: July 4<sup>th</sup>)

Please show attendant a valid drivers license or CA ID card to verify Cupertino city residence.

For more information: (408) 777-3269; [www.cupertino.org/compost](http://www.cupertino.org/compost)

This is a City of Cupertino program; please do not disturb Stevens Creek Quarry personnel.



# Diversion outcomes

**> 2,000 ton increase in food waste diversion  
by end of 2012**

- **1,500 tons – commercial**

- \*Marina Food – from 0 to 520 tons of food waste

- ~ 500 tons – residential

**~ 6% increase in diversion rate since 2010**

# A revised approach to increase organics collection spawned from the challenges observed



# Through the City's planning permit process and stormwater inspections, food recovery is emphasized



# The FRC award & EPA media event was a catalyst for getting businesses and neighboring cities interested



**ReThink**  
**Disposable**  
STOP WASTE BEFORE IT STARTS

# Our current approach

No more **dark** garbage bags.



Please use only **CLEAR** garbage bags.



**Dark** bags go to landfill.

**Clear** bags can be saved from landfill and go to compost.

Help De Anza Oaks reduce waste and use clear bags!



可回收的 **RECYCLE** RECICLAJE

廚餘和污紙 **COMPOST** ABONO



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# Tips

## From Lessons Learned

1. Enlist hauler's support – include incentives, milestones and goals within franchise agreement
2. Ensure that cost to the customer for separating organics is not more than for garbage
3. Visit businesses multiple times – ask about current practices, listen, offer on-site support to implement ordinances, programs and opportunities
4. Support and communicate regularly with the Chamber of Commerce, provide material for Chamber outreach
5. Highlight state and federal goals and regulations when introducing new programs to businesses
6. Engage multiple departments within the agency to achieve shared or similar objectives
7. Seek opportunities to partner regionally with other organizations and agencies



# Questions?

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