Recycling as a Driver for Regional Economic Development
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SERDC Southeast Recycling Development Council
As Costs Skyrocket, More U.S. Cities Stop Recycling

Americans' plastic recycling is dumped in landfills

U.S. Recycling Industry Is Struggling To Figure Out A Future Without China

Your Recycling Gets Recycled, Right? Maybe, or Maybe Not ...

Recycling isn't about the planet. It's about profit
Fake News

Your Recycling Company's No, Right? Maybe, or Maybe Not...

U.S. Recycling Industry Is Struggling To Figure Out A Future Without China

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Recycling isn't about the planet. It's about profit.

The US Recycling System Is Garbage
Continuing Demand

Southeast

• 360 Manufacturers
• 98,000 Employees
• $40,000,000,000 Annual Sales
Chinese Investments

Ecomelida: Orangeburg, S.C.
Green Tech Solution: Blacksburg, S.C.
Nine Dragons: Biron, Wis.
Nine Dragons: Rumford, Maine
Roy Tech Environ: Grant, Ala.
Subsidiary of Shanying International: Wickliffe, Ky.
Yunnan Xintongji Plastic Engineering: Montezuma, Ga.
Recycling Material Flow
“That recycling is beneficial for the environment is probably an uncontested proposition. What is becoming increasingly more obvious is that recycling contributes to the economic health of a state's economy.”

Frank Hefner & Calvin Blackwell
Department of Economics and Finance
College of Charleston
The Economic Impact of the Recycling Industry in South Carolina
Alabama

Manufacturing

• 42 Factories
• 17,350 Jobs
• $7,838,028,050 Annual Sales

Collection and Processing

• 10,477 Jobs
• $540,000,000 Economic Impact

Paid Tip Fees of $31 to bury $85 of recyclable material.
Tennessee

Manufacturing

• 40 Factories
• 7,730 Jobs
• $4,412,814,900 Annual Sales

Collection and Processing

• 12,521 Jobs
• $2,629,220,900 Economic Impact

Paid Tip Fees of $115 to bury $180 of recyclable material.
North Carolina

Manufacturing

• 60 Factories
• 14,142 Jobs
• $4,077,868,590 Annual Sales

Collection and Processing

• 15,909 Jobs
• $3,135,614,600 Economic Impact
Market Development

- Measurement
  - What material demand exists
- Policy
  - Present recycling as an economic driver
- Efficiency
  - Hub and spoke
  - Reduce process costs
Why Measurement Matters
Policy

- Low interest loans
- Sales tax exemptions
- Property tax exemptions
- Disposal fee surcharges
- Disposal bans
  - NC: Plastic bottles and aluminum cans
- Engage economic development staff
- Hold Recycling Day in the Legislature
Efficiency

Hub and Spoke Processing
Two Might Be Better Than One
IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME.
Thank you

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